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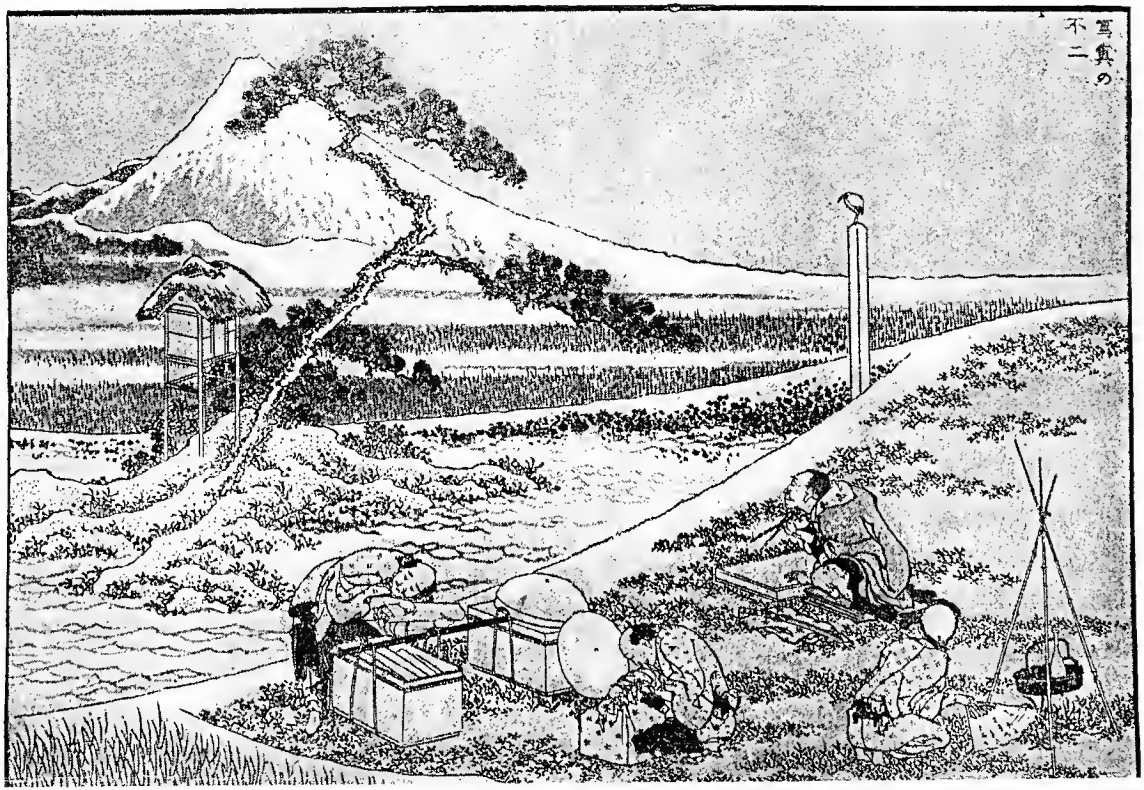
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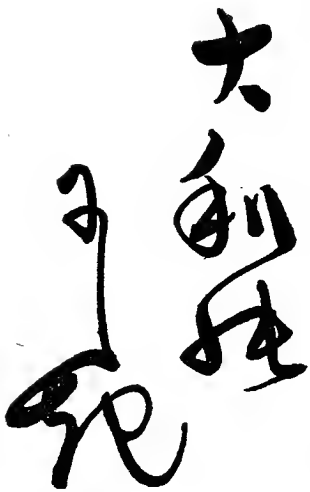
JAPAN AND ITS ART.


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JAPAN

AND ITS

ART



BY

MARCUS B. HUISH, LL.B.

EDITOR OF "THE ART JOURNAL"

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THE NOTES ON JAPAN,

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"Mr. Huish writes with knowledge. His articles when complete will give much of that practical information which is now only to be got at by the study of very costly books."—*St. James's Gazette.*

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"The notes do not disappoint the high expectation formed from Mr. Huish's previous contributions on the subject."—*Northern Whig.*

"Quaintly but beautifully illustrated."—*Guardian.*

PREFACE.

THE reasons which induced the compilation of this Handbook, and the plan upon which it is arranged, are stated at length on page 2 of the Prologue.

It differs from the majority of works which deal with the Art of Japan in the following particulars:—

(*a*) It aims at giving an idea of the country, its history, its customs, religion, and inhabitants, as we see them portrayed in Art.

(*b*) It is an expression of the opinions, not only of all the best authorities (authors and collectors), whether European or American, upon the subject, but of a competent Japanese expert.

(*c*) No book of its size covers so much ground, or is so fully illustrated.

(*d*) It is issued at a cheaper price than any other English manual.

The bulk of the matter comprised in the volume has appeared in the *Art Journal*, but the whole has been revised and much added to.

I must here record my indebtedness to the following authors for the use which I have made of their published works: Mr. W. Anderson, Mr. Franks, Mr. Ernest Hart, Mons. Gonse,

Mr. W. Griffis, Mr. Audsley, and Herr Rein. I have always endeavoured to give my authority for any quotation.

Without the assistance of Mr. Gilbertson, who has set me right whenever I was in doubt, and who voluntarily imposed upon himself the toil of looking through my proof sheets, I could not have completed my task with any feeling of assurance.

I would also thank the many other collectors who placed their collections at my disposal for the purpose of illustration.

I have elsewhere referred to the advantage derived from my intercourse with Mr. Masayuké Kataoka, to whom my best thanks are due for the intelligence which he has brought to bear towards the unravelling of many of the endless entanglements which environ the study of his country's Art.

MARCUS B. HUISH.

New University Club, London,
November, 1888.

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No. 1.—*The Air Castle. From a Kodzuka dated* 1804.

JAPAN AND ITS ART.

PROLOGUE.



"A CLUSTER of isles on the farthest verge of the horizon, apparently inhabited by a race grotesque and savage." Such was the "tolerably distinct" notion which in the twenty-second year of her present Majesty's reign, her Envoy Plenipotentiary, Sir Rutherford Alcock, entertained of the Empire of Japan to which he was acredited, and on his way.*

It is almost needless to add that within a very short time our Envoy both thought and spoke differently of the people amongst whom he sojourned, and that since then he has become an apostle with a mission to spread the gospel of their claim to a place amongst the cultivated nations of the earth.

The country has now been open for thirty years to the view of the foreigner, and in that period has been permeated by civilisation in the shape of railroads,

* "Capital of the Tycoon." Sir R. Alcock. Vol. I., p. 4.

telegraphs, and European legal and civil codes; it has been visited by thousands of globe-trotters and a sprinkling of earnest, inquiring students; it has been enrolled amongst the lands worthy of a Murray's Guide, and it has disseminated its products throughout the length and breadth of the world. Yet, in spite of all this, what do the majority of us know about it?

During the youth of most of us Japan was treated as a *terra incognita*, about which little was required to be known; in manhood, wars and rumours of wars are usually the only causes which necessitate our taking up an atlas, and from these Japan has of late been free. But still, should we wish to consult a geography upon the subject, we can learn surprisingly little from it. The manual most recently issued by one of the first London publishers devotes but sixteen lines to the Empire of Japan, and contains almost as many blunders as there are lines.

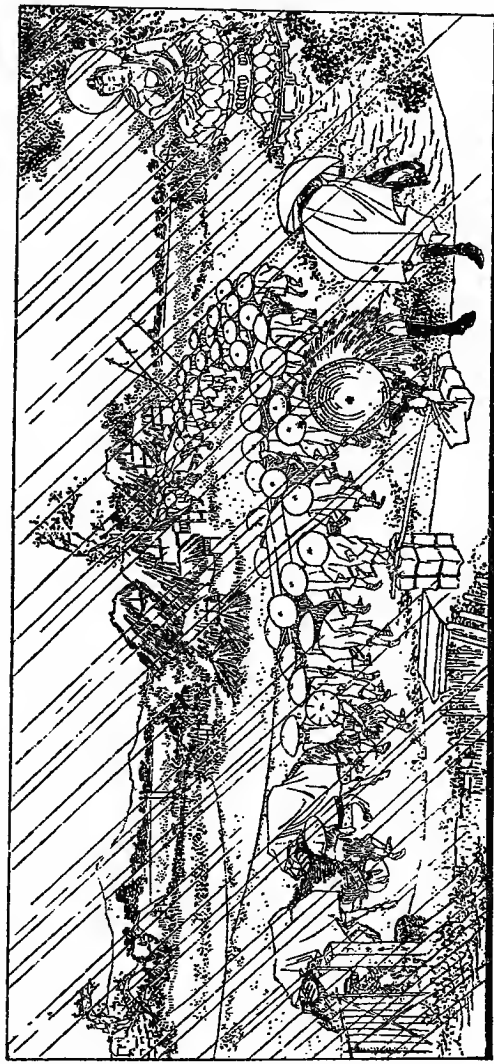
As regards Art we are in some departments considerably better off, though, unfortunately, most of the information is contained in very ponderous tomes, and the price at which it can be obtained is beyond the means of the majority. But of many branches of Art but very little is known either by natives or foreigners, and that little is in volumes written in characters which even a Japanese cannot always decipher with accuracy.

It was this lack which led me from the first days of my interesting myself in Japanese wares to jot down any notes which might be of service to me, and these form the bulk of this work. They have been derived from text-books, from a study of collections in England and France, from information imparted by their owners.* I have, I regret to say, no personal knowledge of the country, but I have been in daily intercourse for a year with Mr. Masayuke Kataoka, who is considered to be the most qualified expert that has visited this country. The advantage of thus being able to verify facts whenever necessary has been considerable.

The aim of the work is to give in a concise and handy form the information which an ordinary individual requires, who,

* Some portion of my knowledge has been acquired by that most certain of all means, the purchase of a collection of curios.

finding nowadays almost every article in use in his daily life



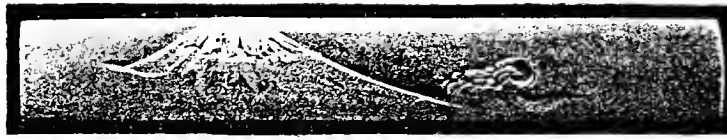
No. 2.—A Sudden Shower. By Hokusai.

redolent of Japanese influence, if not of actual Japanese manu-

facture, wishes to know something concerning its nature and ornamentation. For instance, the lacquer trays which have deluged the country to such an extent that a wholesale dealer told me he had sold sixty thousand pairs in two years. Others besides myself may probably like to know what is lacquer, and what does this landscape upon the tray represent? This sword-guard, which looks like a keyplate, what is its origin, and what does this monster upon it signify? If the purchaser asks the man who sells it, how much wiser will he be? If he be a dealer in "curios," he may perhaps know that the mountain depicted in the background of the scene upon the tray is Fusiyama, and that the crane and bamboo in the foreground are emblems of longevity, but beyond this he can seldom, if ever, go.

The plan upon which the work has been arranged is to give an idea of (*a*) the physical aspect of the country; (*b*) its history; (*c*) its religion; (*d*) its people, their mode of living, their myths and legends; (*e*) its botany and zoology—all as illustrated in Art. Then, as a second part, to treat of its most popular arts, especially those which we term "industrial." Of the various schools of painting only a short notice is given, for these have been thoroughly dealt with by Mr. Anderson in his "Pictorial Arts" and his catalogue to the collection of paintings at the British Museum. For a similar reason, the wide field of ceramics has been but incidentally mentioned, for students can for a shilling buy Mr. Franks's "Handbook to the Collection at the South Kensington Museum," where the subject is exhaustively treated.

The progress which has within the last three years been made in reproductive processes now enables text-books upon Art to be illustrated with some degree of satisfaction. Almost every writer who has hitherto touched upon the subject of Japanese Art has had to confess that his illustrations were a failure, but, with the exception of those dealing with lacquer (which is impossible of reproduction), those in the present volume leave little to be desired. I must add, however, that the subjects illustrated have been selected not so much on account of their rarity, but for their adaptability to explain the letterpress; this must be my apology for many having been taken from my own collection.



No. 3.—Mount Fuji. From a Kodzuka. (Author's Collection.)

CHAPTER I.

THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF JAPAN.

JAPAN is known under various names, the majority of which are not so fanciful as might at first sight be supposed. Chief amongst them is "The Empire of the Rising Sun," that ruler of the universe being also adopted as the national arms, wherein it is portrayed a bright crimson colour. No traveller to Japan is at a loss to understand the assumption of this title, for he will see the blood-red orb rising out of the Eastern seas many a time and oft during his residence there. Then there is Dai Nippon, or Nihon, signifying Great Daybreak (*Nichi*, sun or day; *Hon*, origin or beginning), and Kami-no-kuni,* or Country of the Gods; Nichi-iki, country of the sun; Ni-to, nest of the sun; and Toyoakitsu (happy dragon-fly-shaped) from its supposed resemblance to the form of that insect. Hondo is the name given in Japanese geographies to the large island which practically comprises the whole country. "Japan" is a western corruption of the Chinese Jih-pen-kwoh.

Any one who has paid the slightest attention to the representations of Japanese landscape, whether on metal, lacquer, or other materials, will be aware that mountains form an important feature in it. They are usually piled up one beyond another, with an entire ignorance of the laws of perspective, and in many instances, notably in those which have a Chinese derivation their forms are sufficiently repellent-looking to remind one of

* Kami is the Japanese for all that is uppermost—a god, government a noble, even the hair of the head.

the backgrounds to the pictures of the Mantegnesque school. For most, if not all of this, Japanese artists have abundant reason. Japan is essentially a mountainous country, its level ground not forming an eighth of its entire area; it is in fact nothing more than a ridge of volcanic rocks rising precipitously from the ocean. Even the cliffs on the sea-shore, owing to continued corrosion from unnaturally swift currents, have usually a forbidding aspect; but in the mountains, owing to the decomposition which arises from rain, drought, and frost, the forms are usually rounded. Every remarkable peak is provided with a special god, in whose honour temples are built on the summit, and pilgrimages, which smack of picnics, are indulged in. Chief amongst them is one which meets with more than the usual amount of recognition from Japanese artists, namely, Fuji-san, or Fusi-yama as it is termed by foreigners. There is hardly a work upon Japan which does not open with rapturous words of delight evoked at the first view of the "matchless mountain." To those who have crossed the enormous ocean which separates the continents of Asia and America, the first sight of land after weeks passed with nothing but an expanse of water to gaze upon, must be always pleasant; how much more so when it assumes, as in this case, a beautiful form. Griffis thus describes it: "Afar off, yet brought delusively near by the clear air, sits the queenly mountain in her robes of snow, already wearing the morning's crown of light, and her forehead gilded by the first ray of the yet unrisen sun; far out at sea, long before land is descried, and from a land area of thirteen provinces, the peerless cone is seen and loved." And thus speaks De Fonblanque:—"If there is one sentiment universal amongst all Japanese, it is a deep and earnest reverence for their sacred mountain. It is their ideal of the beautiful in nature, and they never tire of admiring, glorifying, and reproducing it. It is painted, embossed, carved, engraved, modelled in all their wares. The mass of the people regard it not only as the shrine of their dearest gods, but the certain panacea for their worst evils, from impending bankruptcy or cutaneous diseases, to unrequited love or ill-luck at play. It is annually visited by thousands and thousands of pilgrims."

This extinct volcano, rising to a height of 12,450 feet from the plain, almost isolated, of beautiful shape, usually snow-capped, and with clouds encircling it, lends an inexpressible solemnity to the view from whatever point it is seen. Hokusai, one of Japan's greatest artists, published a book in which he depicted it under a hundred different aspects, and our frontispiece shows him at work upon one of them. The two render-



No. 4.—Narihira contemplating Fuji. From a Sword-Guard by Konkwan. Eighteenth Century. (Gilbertson Collection.)

ings of it given here, one is taken from a sword-guard, and shows the poet Narihira unable to take his eyes from a contemplation of its beauties.* The sword-guard (Illustration No. 4) is by Iwamoto Konkwan, a celebrated maker of Yedo (Hamano school, latter half of eighteenth century),

* Narihira was a noble of the ninth century, renowned for his beauty and for his love for Komachi, an equally celebrated poetess. He is frequently depicted riding by her gate, and often playing the flute.

and belongs to Mr. E. Gilbertson, from whose fine collection many of our illustrations are taken. It and its legend testify to the length of time the sacred mountain has been admired. I believe there is not in English annals an example of a love for nature at so remote an epoch. The rendering from a *kodzuka*, or knife-handle (Illustration No. 3), shows an artistic treatment in metal. The object to the right of the mountain is meant to represent Takoaka-mi-no-kami, the dragon of rain, snow, and storms, emerging from the clouds. Iwanaga Himé is the goddess of the mountain. He who dreams of Fuji, two falcons and three egg-plants, will have a long, happy, and prosperous life. This mountain, snow, and the crane are the three perfections of whiteness. The illustration on our cover is from Hokusai's Fuji. It represents the manifestation or sudden creation of Fuji, B.C. 285.* Next to Fusi-yama, Hi-yei-san near Kioto, Ibuki-yama near Lake Biwa, Kirishima, where the gods first set foot on earth, and Asama-yama near Nikko, oftenest find a place in landscape art.

From this mountainous character and a plenteous rainfall, it results that Japanese landscape does not lack for want of water, but the streams and rivers are small, narrow, swift currented, owing to their rapid fall, torrential in the wet, mere brooks in the dry season. They are, however, utilised in every possible way, especially for irrigation. Japanese pictures bear witness to this, but the miniature lakes and waterfalls seen therein are usually artificial.

Another remarkable feature in the conformation of the country is its extent of seaboard. Its coast is one continuous series of indentations, the sea being dotted with islands to the number of nearly four thousand. It has more than one large Inland Sea. It is not therefore surprising to find that seascape occupies a prominent place in Japanese Art. The dark colour which the artist usually gives to his sea is not an exaggeration. The black current, or Japanese Gulf Stream, (*Kuro-shiwo*) which laves the greater part of the kingdom, is remarkable for its conspicuously dark blue hue when in sun-

* See English translation, by F. V. Dickins, with Japanese original engravings.

shine. The Japanese sailor being unable to distinguish between this colour and black has given to the stream the latter name. Besides the Inland Sea there is a large lake, named Omi or Biwa-ko, from its fancied resemblance to a guitar, about the size of the lake of Geneva; being situated in the neighbourhood of Kyōto, and in the midst of lovely scenery, it is frequently delineated in the works of the school of artists which has for centuries had its head-quarters in that



No. 5.—Lake Biwa. From a Metal Inro. (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

city. The districts which surround it have also much interest for the Japanese, for they were the cradle for its early national history. We give illustrations of the two sides of an iron medicine box, whereon are depicted the eight beautiful sights of Omi; namely, The Autumn Moon from Ishi-yoma, Evening Snow on Hira-yama, The Blaze of Evening at Seta, The Evening Bell at Miidera, Boats sailing back from Yabas, A Bright Sky and a Breeze at Awadzu, Rain by Night at Karasaki, and the Wild Geese alighting at Katada.

Waterfalls appear to have a great fascination for Japanese

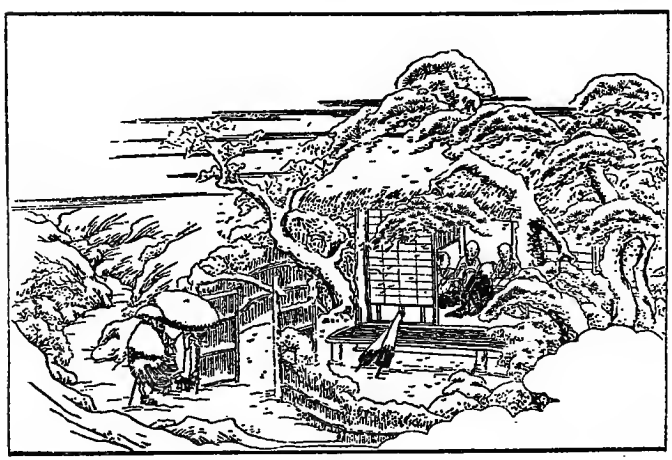
artists, who delight in portraying, especially upon lacquer, the curves of the water and the delicacy of the spray, an additional reason being that many of their legends are woven round them. The country abounds with them, and several are noted for their size, which rivals that of the principal European ones; as a rule they are not recognisable when limned by the Japanese artist, but the probability is that the majority are taken from the neighbourhood of Nikko, the most picturesque part of Japan, concerning which there is a proverb, "He who has not seen Nikko must not talk of Kekko," or must not assume good taste.

When the climate of a country is marked by considerable variations, a delineation of these is sure to find a place in its Art; and this is notably the case with Japan. There are few things which appear to occasion more surprise amongst people who look through any collection of Japanese pictures than the scenes which represent the natives either floundering in the snow, or clad almost in Adam's garb owing to the heat. It has never occurred to them that Japan has any such extremes of temperature; a glance, however, at a chart of the world shows that the upper portion of the country lies within a temperature band which includes Iceland and Canada, and the lower in one which touches the upper portions of Africa. The size of the country is not sufficient to account for this; such an exceptional state of things is brought about by monsoons and an equatorial current. The clothing of the inhabitants evidences these variations, for whilst in summer hardly any clothing is worn by either sex amongst the lower orders, in the winter thick but light garments padded with cotton wool are universal. Winter must be a trying time to the ill-fed peasant; his condition varies but little from what it did a thousand years ago, when the following lines were written:—

"The hamlet bosomed mid the hills
Aye lovely is. In winter time,
The solitude with musing fills
My mind, for now the rigorous clime
Hath banished every herb and tree
And every human face from me."

Translated by F. V. Dickins.

Our illustration shows a wayside inn in winter. Trees, roof, even the umbrellas, are thickly coated with snow which accumulates to a great depth. Within will be seen four persons comforting themselves with the feeble heat given out by the *hibachi* or brazier. The engraving (No. 7) illustrates at once a winter scene and 'Filial Piety.' It is curious to find such a subject on a weapon of war, but the Japanese never tire of inculcating this virtue in their children. The story in this case is of a boy, Moso, whose widowed mother fell ill, and longed for broth



No. 6.—The Country in Winter. After Hokusai.

made of young bamboo shoots, such things not being procurable in winter. His devotion was such that the gods caused the shoots to grow suddenly to the size depicted in our illustration.

There are few effects which a Japanese artist is fonder of depicting than his countrymen struggling under the annoyances of rain, and bringing into requisition the umbrella, with which we are now so conversant: who has not witnessed the young lady hastening to raise her sunshade in a sudden shower? nay, even the warrior on horseback fumbling with his capacious

gingham, or the peasants hurrying along under their huge straw hats, or the birds half hidden in the rainstorm? The sketch on page 3 shows a convoy overtaken by a shower and covering up the baggage. An incident in the picture is noteworthy—the man using the pedestal of the statue of a wayside god, as a foot-rest, a sly cut of Hokusai, the artist, at the waning veneration for the deity. The reason for the



No. 7.—Moso finding the Bamboo Shoots. From a Sword-Guard in the Oldham Museum.

frequent recurrence of such subjects lies in the fact that for several months in the year rain is very much *en évidence* in Japan; the spring and summer are almost tropical in their wetness; the rainfall averages 145 inches at Tokyō, double that of Western Europe, and it all falls in two or three months. Coming as it does with a high temperature, it converts the country into a veritable vapour bath, inducing luxuriant vegetation, and making almost tropical flora to flourish (see illus-

tration in chapter on the Flora, *post*). Its effects upon man and



No. 8.—A Typhoon. After Hiroshigé. (From "L'Art Japonais.")

beast are, however, disastrous, resulting in extreme lassitude and early constitutional decay.

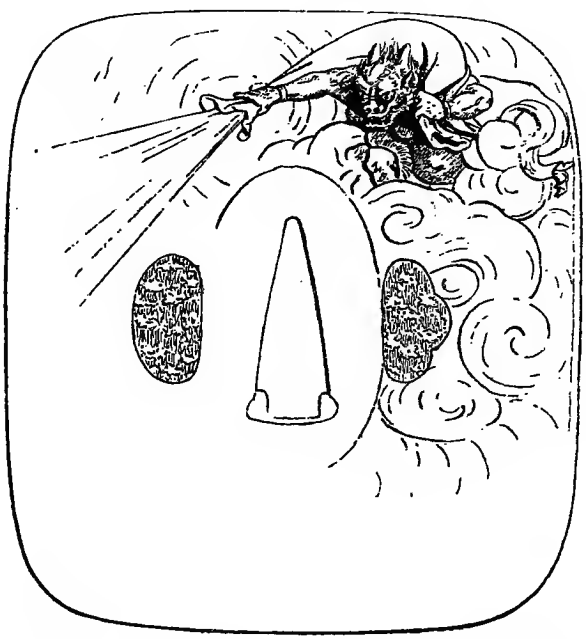
If there is one thing more than another in which Japanese artists excel, it is in the portrayal of wind, whether the soft breeze just fluttering through the bamboo canes, or the furious typhoon raging through the trees and making everything quiver



No. 9.—A Sudden Squall. After Hokusai.

with its force. The inhabitants of this otherwise favoured country have indeed cause to hold in remembrance this mighty element, for early in the month of September the dreaded typhoon sweeps across their country, devastating and carrying

destruction as it goes. It is not wonderful that they ascribe a supernatural origin to it, or that the terrible god of the winds, Kazéno-kami or Futen, and his passage in anger over the face of their country, find a frequent place in their Art. He is very frequently drawn as in our illustration (No. 10), with a sack full of wind over his shoulders; this he holds by



No. 10.—*The God of the Winds.* (*From "L'Art Japonais."*)

the ends with both hands, letting some of the contents emerge through one of them. In a humorous kakemono I found him depicted as having broken his wind-bag and fallen into the sea, where he was being seized by a gigantic crab.

Earthquakes naturally are hardly capable of delineation, but their frequency (during some years the earth being hardly ever quiet) has had a marked and sensible effect upon the

architecture of the country. The houses are all built with a view to safety during these convulsions. They are attached to no foundations, and rest on legs high enough to carry their floors above the torrential rains of summer. The material of which they are constructed is usually wood of sufficiently light make to hurt no one upon whom it may fall. The Japanese ascribe earthquakes to a gigantic fish (see *post*, Chapter X.) which in its anger strikes the coast and thus makes the earth



No. 11.—*Kaminari, the God of Thunder. From a Sword-Guard.* (*Author's Collection.*)

tremble. The recurrence of earthquakes is so constant that in the newspapers of the day they are only noticed in this fashion: "An earthquake was felt in this capital on the 9th instant, at 4h. 54m. 16s. P.M. The duration was 25 seconds, and the shock was a sharp one." Although the god of Thunder, Kaminari or Raiden, is very frequently met with in Japanese Art, his visitations are neither frequent nor violent. He is usually depicted as in the illustration above, where he holds a

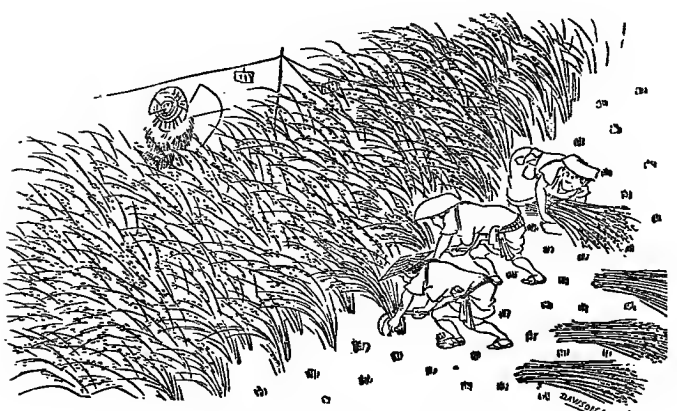
drumstick similar to a dumb-bell, with which he beats the drum seen behind it, and whence proceeds the thunder. Lightning rays often play round his shoulders and also strike the drum.

As regards the aspect of the country, it is everywhere picturesque; a recent traveller says, "No scrap of scenery is ugly or uninteresting." Owing to its volcanic origin the soil is very productive. It has been also described as "a veritable country of flowers," which is easy of belief when one thinks of the representations of them upon almost every object, whether of Art or otherwise, which emanates from the land. These will be dealt with more particularly in a later chapter. I will merely here continue the quotation just begun—"All along the hedges, in the orchards, and about the villages, tufts of flowers and foliage of dazzling hue stand out against the dark tints of a background of pines, firs, cedars, cypresses, laurels, green oak, and bamboos." It may be imagined how delightful this scene must be when the autumn comes; when after the tropical rains the air is fresh and bracing, the sky is a cloudless blue, the landscape is coloured with the brightest tints, and the dust which prevailed earlier in the year has been washed away.

The country is everywhere intersected with fine roads; one, the Tō-kai-dō, or "Road of the Eastern Sea," leading from Kyōto to Tōkyō, was one of the glories of Japan, and with its stations has over and over again been delineated by the Japanese artists upon Inros and other things; but the railway and the telegraph posts are quickly altering the face of nature. Another, the Naka-sen-dō, or "Road of the Central Mountains," also leads from Tōkyō to Kusatsu, near Kyōto. All the great ways of the Empire start, and all the distances are measured, from the Nihon Bashi, or "Bridge of the Rising Sun," situated in the centre of Tōkyō.

The land is thoroughly cultivated, but always on a small scale. Miss Bond says that the field of the sluggard has no existence in Japan, but that it is tilled with a pencil instead of a plough. Rice being the staple food and the wealth of Japan, rice-fields abound in the flats, and the plant is recognisable in

pictures in its various stages of growth. It is first thickly sown in soil which is very heavily manured, and is flooded every night to a depth of two or three inches. This dries off during the day under a hot sun, giving off a loathsome smell. The seedlings, which grow in about fifty days to the height of three inches, are of a most verdant green. They are then pulled up and transplanted in small tufts. During the whole period the people are busily engaged in the slush, weeding and pulling up the mud and slush in which it is kept until it is ripe for reaping. It is then cut with a small sickle,



No. 12.—*Rice-cutting. After Hokusai.*

and the sheaves are suspended across poles slung on forked sticks.* Japan, in a ballad of the eighth century, is called the "Land of Waving Rice-fields."

Rice is not only the principal edible, but the national drink (sake) is distilled from it.

Had Japan been a country in which minerals were scarce, it is probable that much of her finest Art would not have

* Mr. Dickens (Intro. Murray's Japan) says that millet is the common food of the peasantry, with whom rice is a rare luxury. Its seeds afford artists in metal an opportunity of showing off some of their cleverest manifestations.

been produced, for the hermit-like policy which has possessed the nation would have effectually prevented her obtaining them outside the limits of her territory. But she has fortunately been bounteously dealt with in this respect. Griffis states that gold and silver in workable quantities are found in many places. Copper is very abundant, and of the purest kind. Lead, tin, antimony, and manganese abound. The finest quality of iron can be obtained from magnetic oxides. Gold for a long period had the same value as silver, hence the profusion with which it is used in articles of every-day use—a profusion which has led to many of the finest Art pieces being melted down for the sake of their inlays and overlays. In many of the small pieces of metal-work which adorn the swords, we find gold, silver, platina, copper, iron, steel, zinc, besides numerous amalgams. An idea of the wealth of metal in the country may be obtained from the fact that the great Buddha idol of Nara, which is only one of many nearly as large in size, is made of bronze which is composed of gold 500, mercury 2,000, tin 17,000, copper, 986,000 pounds weight, a worthy rival to the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up.

The population of Japan is now about thirty-eight millions, contained in eight million households. The largest cities are Tōkyō 902,000, Osaka 353,000, Kyōto 255,000, Nagoya 126,000, and Kanazawa 104,000. In 1885 there were 3,350 Kwazoku, or persons of noble rank, and 1,938,000 Shizoku, answering to the old Samurai.

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORY OF JAPAN.



No. 12A.—Mask of Ouzouné.
(Gilbertson Collection.)

It is surprising that the history of Japan, and its fascinating surroundings have not been laid hold of by Western writers more than they have, for never since pen was first put to paper has there been such a discovery as that which came to light when, in the fifties of this century, communication with Japan was first opened up. Reference has already been made to the ignorance which prevailed as to the condition of the peoples who inhabited this *terra incognita*, and to the futile endeavour of our Envoy Extraordinary to find out anything about them, although he had for a long period been resident but three days' sail away. We now know that Japan was, to everybody's amazement, found to be endowed with a dynasty extending in unbroken line into centuries before our Christian era, and an Art of such an exceptionally high standard that every civilised nation at once rushed in to copy and benefit by it. This being so it is somewhat remarkable that in these days when the universal cry is "Who shall show us some new thing?" authoritative text-books upon Japanese history may be numbered on one's fingers, and no two of them are agreed upon the majority of their facts.

The Japanese themselves are very proud of their history. Few nations are so generally well informed concerning it. This, no doubt, arises from its forming one of the principal subjects for instruction in their schools, from their artists having for centuries past derived a great part of their subjects from it, and from their stage being occupied almost entirely with dramas founded upon it. That this is so is not surprising, for its chapters form a continuous record of scenes of heroism and chivalry of the most fascinating character.

Brevity must be my aim, but this is hardly possible when it is absolutely necessary to go back to the creation, and the country's authentic history is as old as our own.

The creation was, according to tradition, brought about in this wise. In the dim ages of the past there existed a Trinity who dwelt in space. Later came other deities (Kami), with separate existences, and after seven generations begotten from them, the creation, which was confined to Japan, was decided on, and carried through in six stages, almost similar to those in the Jewish Pentateuch, the work being delegated to Izanagi and his sister, Izanami.* From the god sprang certain terrestrial deities, amongst whom were Ama-térasu (Shimmei), the beautiful goddess of the sun, Tsukuyomi, the god of the moon, and Susanō (Godzu Tennō), god of the tides.† A story which finds frequent illustration in Japanese Art is that of the quarrel between Ama-térasu and her brother, Susanō, and her consequent retirement to a cave, whence she was inveigled by the dancing of a goddess, variously named Okamé, Ouzoumé, or Uzumé. It is narratèd at length in Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," and Reed's "Japan," and is one of the fairy stories recently published in a delightfully illustrated

* These and most other Japanese names vary in their spelling in every volume dealing with the subject.

† There is apparently no fire god in the old Japanese mythology. This is remarkable considering the frequency with which that element devastates the populous places. It is seldom that one takes up a Japanese newspaper without meeting with some such notice as this: "During the late fire at Onomachó Onogori, 1,095 houses and 222 godowns were destroyed."

form as a child's book under the title of "Yamata-no-Orochi"* from which we take our illustration (No. 22*a*). Masks of the fair dancer are to be found in every curio shop. We give an illustration of one (page 20). The features upon these masks are always similar, and have been handed down for centuries —a narrow forehead adorned with imperial spots of sable, puffed-out cheeks, dimpled chin, and laughing countenance. One of them is usually to be seen in every Japanese house. In her full-length figures, she usually carries in her hands a bundle of reeds and a dart bound round with herbs and little bells. Many ancient customs still exist which originated in this quarrel, notably the gôheï, or branches adorned with strips of paper cut in notched fashion, and which are hung in all Shinto places of worship† across the entrance to the *miya* or shrine, the drum upon which Uzumé danced, and the cocks who now inhabit the precincts of the temple, and which were then engaged to attract Ama-térasu's attention by crowing in concert. So too the sacred burnished circular mirror wherein the goddess beheld her likeness, and which is the origin of the round mirror of metal which Japanese women still use as their only looking-glass. The two patches (*hohotsu*, or *bōbō*) are still worn by ladies of rank to replace the shaven eyebrows, and the dancing of Uzumè before the cavern is imitated in a pantomimic dance practised in every Japanese village. Another frequent subject for illustration is Susanō rescuing Inada-himé, killing the eight-headed dragon after he had induced him to partake of sakè set out in eight jars. His exploit is depicted upon the bank notes of the



No. 13.—*Kodzuka, showing Gohei. By Goto. Seventeenth Century.* (*Author's Collection.*)

* Kobunsha's Japanese Fairy Tale Series.

† These first took the form of offerings of hemp (*nusa*), a plant looked upon as one of the most precious productions of the soil, and it was presented as such to the gods. In modern times worthless paper was substituted. They are intended to attract the attention of the local deity to his abode.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry," p. 77.

country. A sword which he found in the tail of the dragon is one of the three sacred emblems in the imperial regalia. We shall have occasion to speak of it later on, in the chapter on Legends, as the herb queller (Kusanagi). He, too, was the father of Daikoku, a god of Good Fortune, of whom more anon.

The sun goddess is still the object of much veneration. Thousands of pilgrimages are made yearly to her temples in Isé, and those of Uke-mochi-no Kami, or Toyo-uké-bimé, the goddess of Plenteous Food, or of the Earth. The pilgrims are recognisable on their return by large bundles of charms wrapped in oiled paper and suspended by a string from the neck. (See Murray's "Japan," p. 168.)

From the issue of these and other divinities was the whole of Japan overspread, the dynasty of the Mikado* being in direct descent from the goddess of the sun. The Japanese era dates from Zimmou or Jimma, the earliest of the Mikados respecting whom there is any probable data. He came to the throne B.C. 660. A scene in his life also furnishes a subject for one of the national bank notes. To the Mikados the goddess entrusted the three emblems of imperial power, the sacred mirror, the sword of justice just mentioned, and a necklace of jewels. These are still in existence at Miya, Isé, and Tokyō.

I must now leave for a time the mythology of Japan, which, remarks Mr. Griffis, "like that of Greece, is full of beauty, pathos, poetic fancy, charming story, and valorous exploit. Like that, it forms the soil of the national Art, whether expressed in bronze, porcelain, colours, poetry, song, picture, dance, pantomime, or romance. It is the doctrinal basis of the ancient and indigenous religion, called *Kami-no-michi* or *Shinto*, *i.e.* the way or doctrine of the gods;" this will be treated of in the next chapter.

Until the end of the third century of our era little is with certainty known of the history of Japan; the Mikado was, however, gradually assuming kingly rather than tribal sway, and below him feudalism was growing up.

*Mikado means "Sublime Gate." Tennō, King of Heaven, is the official title, and answers to our Majesty.

Amongst the personages of this period (which may still be called legendary) who figure in Art is Yamato-Daké, whose struggle with the giant Idzoumo is an oft-told tale. It was his wife, the lovely Oto Tachibana Himé, who died by leaping into the sea to appease the sea-god and to save her husband (see Illustration No. 14). Yamato putting out the flames with



No. 14.—*Oto-Tachibana leaping into the Sea.*

the sword found by Susanō in the dragon's tail is narrated in Chapter VIII. A character which has been effigied again and again in Japanese Art ever since it existed is the Empress Jingō, whose wonderful exploits are told, at length, by Griffis ("Mikado's Empire," p. 75). In the collection of pictures, images, and dolls which, on the 5th of May in every year in Japanese households, teach the children the deeds of national heroes

and instil into them laudable examples, the Empress is placed among the male warriors. Another favourite subject of the artists is a group consisting of a snowy-bearded man, Také-no-uchi, her minister (he is recognisable by wearing long court robes over a suit of armour, bear-skin shoes, a tiger-skin scabbard, and a noble's high peaked cap), carrying in his arms the infant Ōjin, son of the Empress, on the deck of his war galley; it is usually depicted receiving from Kai-Riu-O, the dragon king of the world under the sea, the tide jewels. The infant Ojin grew up to be a great warrior, and



No. 15.—Hadésu (Kashiwa-déno Omi Hadésu) killing the tiger. From an Ivory in the Gilbertson Collection.

is even now worshipped as the patron of war. Numbers of shrines are dedicated to him under his name of Hachiman, or "eight banners." The tide jewels are used very frequently in ornamental art, and adorn even the paper currency of the empire. Hachiman is usually depicted with a horrible scowling countenance, holding, with arms akimbo, a broad two-edged sword. Hadésu, ambassador to the Corea, A.D. 545, killing the tiger which had destroyed his daughter (Illustration No. 15), is also a frequent subject with artists (for particulars see Anderson's British Museum Catalogue, p. 391).

The interval between the third and twelfth centuries* was specially notable for the introduction of Chinese writing, Art, the philosophies of Confucius and Buddha, and the retirement of the Mikado from public life owing to the rise of noble families, who usurped his power, obtained possession of all civil and military offices, and rendered him inaccessible to his people.

The first of these families to come to the front was that of Fujiwara, in the seventh century. It still holds the foremost place among the nobility of Japan, 95 out of the 155 noble families being of that name and descent.

It was not likely that the reins of power would be allowed to remain uncontested in the hands of any individual or clan, and the Sugawara, Taira,† and Minamoto families, in the centuries to come, strove for, and in succession secured, the pride of place.

Their struggles for supremacy fill the pages of Japanese history for nearly five centuries. The exploits of many men during this period find frequent exposition in Art: for instance, Kiyo-mori, a Taira, who long terrorised Japan, and subdued the Sugawaras and Minamotos, only to suffer defeat in turn at their hands; Yoshitomo, a Minamoto, his rival, who was treacherously murdered; the flight of Yoshitomo's beautiful concubine, Tokiwa; she is usually depicted toiling through the snow, with a baby at her breast, and two children, one carrying his father's sword, at her side. The baby was Yoshitsuné; he lived to be the "Bayard of Japan," and to earn the most famous name in the nation's history for his prowess. His elder brether, Yoritomo, also grew up to be a great general, and in reality, if not in name, ruler of all Japan (Mons. Gonse calls him the Napoleon of Japan). The adventures of the two occur over and over again in Art: for instance, Yoritomo secreting himself in a hollow tree after his defeat at Ishi-bashi-yama; Yoshitsuné's learning to fence from the Tengus; his fight with Benkei on Gōjō Bridge (see Illustration

* Workers in metals and stuffs were introduced about the sixth century from Corea.

† The "Historic Romance of the Taira" is one of the most popular of the many works of fiction in Japan.

No. 16), as to which note the astonishment of Benkei at the agility of the youthful Yoshitsuné, who leaps so far into the air above the bridge as to be almost invisible.* No collection can be looked over without coming across half-a-dozen episodes



No. 16.—*Benkei and Yoshitsuné fighting on Gōjo Bridge.*

in the life of the two last-named, who, after their combat, became inseparable friends.

After numerous defeats, the brothers Yoritomo and Yoshitsuné were victorious over Kiyo-mori, who saved himself by death (in 1181) from seeing his family dragged from power, his last wish being that Yoritomo's head should hang on his tomb. Four years later, in a naval contest, the Tairas were utterly defeated, and by sea and land every effort was made to exterminate them.

We must dwell a little longer upon this period, for then it was that the dual government, which has puzzled so many modern writers on Japan, became an actuality. Yoritomo after his success founded a city at Kamakura, on the bay of



No. 17.—*Yoshitsuné at the battle of Yashima.*

Tōkyo, which he made his capital; whilst leaving the government nominally in the hands of the Mikado at Kyōto, he actually assumed the reins of power at Kamakura, and estab-

* These and other illustrations are purposely taken from small objects, so that as many as possible may be given.

lished a military government, which lasted until a score of years ago. It was called *bakufu*, or curtain government, because of the curtain (*baku*), often to be met with in illustrations, which surrounded the commander's tent. He was the first Shōgun.* His fame was tarnished by his treatment of his brother Yoshitsuné, of whom he was jealous, and whom he is said to have put to death when only thirty years old.

The illustration at page 37 shows the present condition of what was once the enormous city of Kamakura. Nothing now remains but a few temples surrounded by groves of magnificent trees.

A division of the people into civil and military classes about this period had a most unfortunate effect upon the future of the country; the former, which may be termed the agricultural element, and comprised the larger portion of the population, continued for centuries in the same condition of semi-civilisation; the latter became a clan which ever since has occupied the entire field of arms, learning, and intellect. Under their title of *Samurai* we shall have to deal with them at length when we come to the chapter on Society in Japan.



No.18.—Kojima writing on the Cherry Tree.

Griffis points, in his account of this date, to a Japanese proverb, "There is no seed to a great man," as being exemplified over and over again in the history of Japan. It occurred in this instance. Yoritomo's descendants had no stamina, and soon became the puppets of the Hōjō family, who for a century and a half tyrannised over the country and sucked the life-blood out of the people. They even banished the Mikado. Two episodes from this period, of which I give illustrations, are great favourites with artists, and are to be found on the national bank notes: Kojima, a faithful adherent of the Mikado Go-Daigo, writing on a cherry-tree, which his captive lord was to pass, a stanza bidding him live in

* This appointment, Sei-i Tai Shōgun (Barbarian-subjugating Great General), was the highest honour conferred by the Mikado. It was afterwards, until 1868, appropriated in succession by various families.

hope; the other, Nitta Yoshisada, casting his sword into the sea as a prayer-offering to the gods, that the waves might recede and permit his army to cross, in order to engage the Hōjōs. Need I to add that his request was granted? The battle which followed resulted in the overthrow of the usurper's power and the restoration of the Mikado, A.D. 1333.

Merit did not, however, meet with its reward, for Nitta and Kusunoki Masa-shigè—the latter one of the noblest names in Japanese history—found themselves supplanted by one Ashikaga, a consummate villain, who embroiled all parties, gave Japan a "War of the Roses," tilled the soil for feudalism, and abandoned the land for two centuries and a half to



No 19.—*Nitta throwing his sword into the sea. From a Pouch Ornament.* (*Author's Collection.*)

slaughter, ignorance, and paralysis of national progress.* He did not assume the Shōgunate himself, but he set up a rival Emperor, and in 1336 a conflict commenced between the northern and southern dynasties, which lasted for fifty-six years. He himself died in 1356, but his family ruled as Shōguns till 1573.

The precincts of the court at Kyōto and of the Shōgun at Kamakura were naturally the quarters where artists first congregated, but the very causes which were at work to keep these as centres resulted in a spread of Art knowledge. A Daimiō, who, in order that he might be under observation, was

* Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," p. 185.

compelled to spend six months of the year at court, naturally aped at his distant home the fashion of the capital, and would probably take back in his train a worker in metal, or in lacquer, who could adorn for him his arms or his fortress. Such an artist, working with the sole idea of doing his best to please his lord, in want for nothing, having ample time at his disposal, and full of natural ability, was bound to produce results having originality and individuality; and this would be even more noticeable in the products of succeeding generations, when the skill had become hereditary, and the worker was the possessor of the secrets and methods of his ancestors. Although during a long period war was the rule and peace the exception, the arts made continuous and steady progress. Naturally, at a time when education was neglected and every one carried his life in his hand, it could only be here and there that this occurred. But warfare itself stimulated some professions—for instance, the manufacture and adornment of armour. When the owner's life depended upon the trustworthiness of his blade, every effort was made to render it as perfect as possible; so we find the sword-makers attaining to a proficiency which has never been excelled by any other nation. The religious houses, save and except during the persecutions of Nobunaga, afforded a retreat where the arts could be followed in peace and quietness, though their inmates were only too ready to arm themselves and fight whenever occasion required. The service and adornments of the temple called for paintings on silk (*kakemono*), sculptures, bronzes, altar furniture, lacquer, and goldsmiths' work. The secret processes by which many marvellous Art products were then brought about, such, for instance, as the ancient *cloisonné* enamel and violet lacquer, have never been divulged, and have died with the extinction of the families who excelled in them.

The notables of the Ashikaga family who find a place in Art were Yoshimitsu (1368—1393) and Yoshimasa (1449—1471), who introduced the political reunions, still kept up under the name of Cha-no-yu, or teas (see *post*, Chapter VII.), as well as dancing and theatres. Both were artists themselves, and the latter encouraged painting and lacquer. His reign was

perhaps the most brilliant in history from an Art standpoint. In it flourished Sesshiū (1421—1507), Kana Masanobu, Kana Moto-nobu (1476—1559) (the Japanese Raphael)—founders of schools bearing their names.

It was near the close of the Ashikaga rule, probably in 1542, that Japan was discovered by Europeans. The nation was not then antagonistic to the foreign element, which with its religion was welcomed. The Dutch were the first to avail themselves of this opening for commerce, and for nearly two centuries they monopolised it.

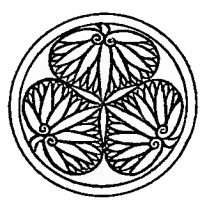
What may be termed the modern period came in with Ota Nobunaga, a Taira, whose military dictatorship bridged over the interval between the expiring power of the Ashikagas and the strong government of the Tokugawas. He and Toyotomi Hidé-Yoshi, or Hidéyoshi (better known as Taïkō-Sama, "Lord Great Merit"), paved the way for the constitutional rule of the Tokugawas.

Nobunaga came to the front about 1542, taking the side of Ashikaga Yoshiaki until he quarrelled with him in 1566, deposed him, and brought to an end the rule of his family, which had lasted over a span of two hundred and fifty years. He was fortunate in having generals of great capacity under him, by whose aid he obtained supremacy, not only over the greater portion of the empire, but over the Mikado himself. His death resulted from a joke, he having put one of his officers' heads under his arm and made a drum of it, an insult which was never forgotten by the offended one, who soon after brought about an émeute in which Nobunaga to save himself from capture set fire to the temple in which he was, and committed *hara-kiri*, or "happy despatch."

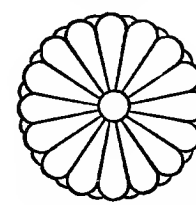
Hidéyoshi, who followed Nobunaga, solidified the empire, encouraged military enterprise, and intellectual, commercial, and artistic activity. He especially fostered the Keramic industry.

"Raku" ware takes its name from the Chinese character, signifying "happiness" or "enjoyment," which was upon his seal, he having given Tanaka Chojiro the potter permission to use it.

We now arrive at one who stood foremost among men, who was a legislator as well as a warrior, who could win a victory and garner the fruits of it. Tokugawa Iyéyasŭ, the hero of Sékigahara, the most decisive battle in Japanese history, the creator of the perfected dual system of government and of feudalism, and the founder of Yedo.* After the death of Hidéyoshi, differences arising amongst the governors of the provinces as well as jealousy of himself, he encountered and defeated them and their army, 180,000 strong, in the battle just named. The result was the accession of his (the Tokugawa) family to power, the hereditary possession of the Shōgunate, and the isolation of Japan from all the world during a period of two hundred and sixty-eight years. Yedo became in effect the capital, and peace



No. 20.—Badge of Tokugawa family.



No. 21.—Imperial Badge of Japan.

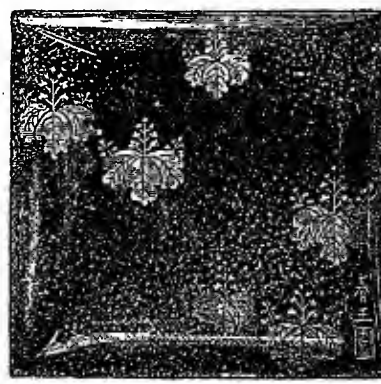
was the rule for centuries. Iyéyasŭ was made Shōgun in 1603. The title Tai-kun (Tycoon, or Great Prince) was assumed only by the last three Shōguns of the Tokugawas.

Wares made for, or under the patronage of, the Tokugawa family may be recognised by their bearing the family badge (Illustration No. 20), three mallow leaves, their points meeting in the centre of a circle. Those made for the Mikado have the kirimon, three leaves and flowers of the *Paulownia imperialis* (Illustration No. 22). The family or court badge is distinguished by the flowers having five and three, instead of seven and five buds. The Imperial badge of

* Griffis, "Mikado's Empire." The name of Yedo was changed to Tōkyo upon the abolition of the Shogunate, in 1868, when the Mikado made it his capital in place of Kyōto.

Japan (Illustration No. 21) is a very conventional rendering of the chrysanthemum. Latterly all of them are being perpetually forged for the European market.

As a natural result of peace and quietness the arts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries flourished to an extraordinary degree; not a single branch of them but advanced year by year, until shortly after the commencement of the present century, when a decadence set in, as the result of excessive luxury. The policy of isolation from other nations, much as it injured the country, was nothing less than a blessing to its Art, which continued to be pure, individual



No. 22.—Lacquer Box with Mikado's Crest. From Gonse's "L'Art Japonais."

and unmechanical. We have little here to do with what it was that brought about the ruin in a few months of a power which appeared likely to last for centuries yet to come. The rest of the world is the richer for the result of the events of 1868. The pauperising of the ancient families, by the confiscation of their lands to such an extent that princes and landed proprietors by thousands now keep body and soul together by picking tea, making paper, or digging the mud of rice-fields once their own, was naturally followed by their much prized treasures flooding the markets and being scattered through-

out the length and breadth of the world. Patriots are now discovering that their country no longer contains the finest



No. 2.—Ama-terasu being entic[illegible] from the cave.

specimens of its arts, and many are using their best endeavours to repurchase and carry them back again.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGION OF JAPAN.

"Japan is not a land where men need pray,
For 'tis itself divine."
"*Manyefushifu*," *Trans. by Chamberlain, p.* 88.

THERE is no nation under the sun whose Art has not been materially influenced and assisted by its religion, and this has undoubtedly been the case with Japan, in spite of its people not being highly endued with what has been termed "the religious faculty."

It will not do to believe the travelled Japanese of the present day whose recollection only extends to a date posterior to the recent Revolution, when a blow was struck at all religious supremacy, and who considers it the correct thing in the Western world to sneer at faith and to ape the sceptic. It will not do, for everything points to the contrary, and shows that to religion Japan owes the greater portion of its Art.

The religions of Japan are so intricate and complex that it will be impossible for us to wander into a discussion of their mysteries. Herr Rein considers that no side of Japanese national life is so difficult for foreigners to appreciate, for although the religious instinct manifests itself in temples, idols sacrifices, ceremonies and processions, in prayer and preaching, a scarcely intelligible indolence and ignorance prevent the attainment of much information on the subject. Only those who have the time and critical skill to search deeply, and receding from present ideas bury themselves in the old written traditions, can

unearth the mysteries which lie beneath accumulations of centuries.

The most complete account of the varied religions of Japan is to be found in the introduction to Murray's Handbook to Japan, but unfortunately this volume is not now purchasable out of that country.

Shortly, the religions of Japan are as follows.

The earliest worship, undoubtedly, was that of the heavenly bodies, wind, fire, thunder, and even the mountain streams and woods. As to most of these I touched in my first chapter, and they need be dwelt upon no further here than to say that in one form or another their worship still exists. Following this came the deification of the illustrious dead and of ancestors, and this is still continued, for in almost every house memorial tablets of dead members of the family may be seen, who immediately on their decease become "Kami," or beings to whom prayer may be offered.

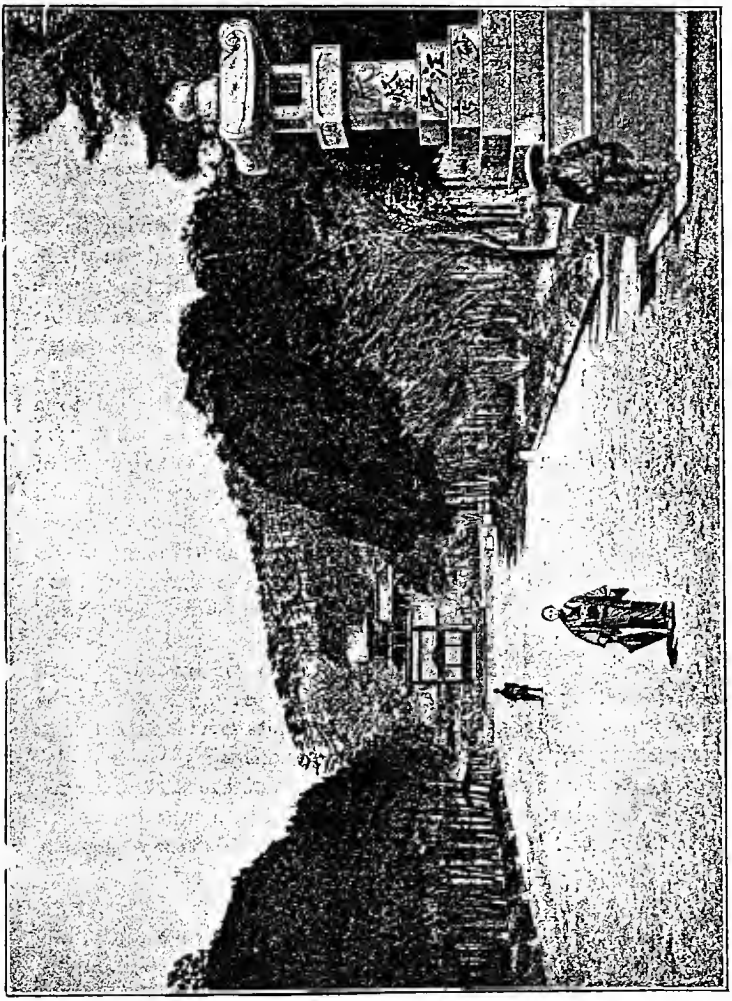
For long ages it has been the custom of the Mikado in his spiritual capacity, and by virtue of his descent from the great sun-goddess, to exalt into Kami, patriots, heroes, or benefactors of the race. They are now said to number a million.

This really constitutes nearly the whole of the ancient religion of the country. Until the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century it had no name, but it was shortly afterwards termed Shintō, or Kami-no-michi, *i.e.* the "Way" or "Doctrine of the Gods." "Shin" being the Chinese, "Kami" the Japanese equivalent for a spirit, and "tō" and "no-michi" for doctrine.

Shintōism can hardly be said to have a definite creed or moral code. Dr. Dresser, in his "Japan," considers that the whole faith may be summed up in the text from our Bible, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," and to this is due that thoroughness which is characteristic of all its Art and other workmanship in the past. Shintōism has influenced Art to a far less degree than its companion religion Buddhism, for it advocates simplicity of worship and life, and absence of decoration and adornment; it worships no images, and limits its sacred colours to red and white.

The Torii, or double T-shaped gateways, are the principal

external signs marking the entrances to its temples. Pictures



No. 23.—Shinto Temple at Kamakura.

of these erections are to be found in almost every illustrated book upon Japan. One will be seen in the distance in the view

of Kamakura (p. 3), and upon the left of the lowest compartment but one of the medicine box, Illustration No. 5 (p. 9). They are supposed to have been originally used for rests for the sacred cocks which ushered in the morn, but this idea is no longer adhered to. Shinto Torii are usually of plain wood, and straight lined; Buddhist, when of wood, are painted or sheathed in copper, and the cross bar is curved; they are sometimes of stone or bronze; recently a huge one has been made of cast iron! Apropos of this, frequent representations of the cock which abounds round Shintō temples are to be found in Japanese Art. One often depicts him seated upon the drum which summons the faithful to service. The interior of the temples usually only contain, (1) a metal mirror, emblem of divine splendour, probably of the sun; (2) goheï (imperial gifts), strips of paper, usually white but sometimes black, often gilt on the edges, cut out of one piece and attached to a wand; upon these the Kami or spirit rests ;* (3) a ball of rock crystal, emblem of the purity of the Kami; (4) two vases of pottery or porcelain, holding boughs of the evergreen Sakaki. No lacquer or metal ornament is supposed to be allowed. At home, a small dais, Kami-dana, raised above and apart from the rest of the room, represents the family altar; upon this stands a wooden shrine like a temple, as well as a vase, in which each morning a sprig of evergreen and a little rice and cake are placed, as offerings to the god by the faithful. Each evening a lighted lamp is also so disposed. It will thus be seen that this religion offers little encouragement to Art, and merely influences good and honest workmanship.

The obelisk-like structure to the right of the view of Kamakura is a lantern, in which the sacred fire was burned in ancient times. They are constantly seen in Japanese pictures, not being exclusively confined to Shintō temples.

A few words must suffice for the Doctrines of Confucius, which were introduced into Japan in the third century, and soon tacked themselves on to Shintōism. His philosophy, which is more a code of political ethics than of religious doctrine, is summed up by Rein thus: "His true follower is a

* See Illustration No. 13.

good son, a loyal subject, and a faithful husband; amongst a hundred virtues, piety towards parents is the chief; among ten thousand sins adultery is the worst." Such a teaching naturally assisted ancestor worship and the feudal system.

Little more can be said of the Taoist system of metaphysics, founded by Lao Tsze, or the "Old Child," so called because from his birth he had the head of an old man.

Japan has been termed the "Land of Great Peace." Those who glanced through the civil history of the country, as briefly summarized in my second chapter, will hardly believe such a title to be in any way applicable. But as regards religious history it certainly holds good. The advent of a new form of religion into almost every land of whose history we are cognisant has invariably been marked by warfare, persecution, and enmities of the most bitter character. But in Japan (if we except the expulsion of Christianity when it attempted to gain a foothold in the sixteenth century, and the persecution of the Buddhists under Nobunaga) for twelve hundred years two rival religions have continued side by side without any apparent hatred, jealousy, or rivalry.

Buddhism found its way to Japan in the seventh century, and made rapid progress. By the ninth century it had accommodated itself to the few tenets of Shintōism, and had by the aid of gorgeous ritual and splendid finery laid hold of and encouraged the religious sense which until then had lain dormant. To this religion is due, in a great measure, the nation's high state of civilisation and culture, and especially its great fondness and appreciation of nature. It bears a strong resemblance to Roman Catholicism, with its army of saints, its love of decoration, incense, vestments, processions, celibacy, fasting, and legends.

Undoubtedly the rise of the popular school of artists has had much to do with the decline of religion in Japan. The natural bent of the Japanese mind is toward the ludicrous, and "fear tempered with fun" describes the attitude of the popular mind towards religion. When, therefore, at the end of the eighteenth century a school of artists recruited from the ranks arose, it did not hesitate to present the gods in extravagant and

comical postures and costumes, intense and grotesque in their actions. This was fatal to that reverence upon which the continuance of the whole structure depended.

Until the revolution of 1868 the mass of the people undoubtedly had confidence in their gods, but upon this event happening, the Buddhist religion was dethroned from the position of state which it had occupied under the Shōguns, its ordinances were abolished, its possessions were confiscated, and many of its finest treasures were distributed over the length and breadth of the world. The images of the gods themselves, the vestments of their priests, the candlesticks, incense-burners, and other articles which adorned their temples, came into the market. Miss Bird tells that in her journey through the country she found countless Buddhas* lying prostrate and uncared for; but probably many of these had fallen into neglect prior to the Revolution, owing to the decay of the religion itself, for she gives a doleful account of the state of the people in these remote parts. All that remains to them of religion are a few superstitions, futurity is a blank about which they hardly trouble themselves, their standard of morality is very low, and their life is neither beautiful nor pure.

Shintōism, which had always been the creed of the Mikados, was at the Revolution made the national religion, and its priesthood were reinstated in the temples from which they had been ousted by the Buddhists. A large number of temples were purified, which appears to have principally consisted in destroying and confiscating their treasures. The results of the attempt to change the national faith has not been successful, and the effect has been to disparage one religion in the eyes of the people without resuscitating another.

A movement has lately been set on foot amongst an influential section of the educated Japanese to adopt Christianity as the state religion, not from any belief in its tenets, but because of the secondary benefits its acceptance insures, and because it is

* These pass by the name "Buddha," though there never was any individual bearing that title. Buddha means "awake," "enlightened," and to be a "Buddha" is to have attained to the highest degree of saintship.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry."

the creed of the most highly civilised nations. But it is hardly likely to lead to anything, and is only worthy of remark as another phase in the tendency to Europeanise everything. The attitude of the serious portion of the nation towards Christianity is, at present, one of respectful hesitation, many of its tenets, such as the atonement through blood, being altogether contrary to the doctrines which have been inherited by those in the Buddhist faith. A further considerable drawback is that amongst a considerable section of the foreign community the Japanese see no attempt at any observance of the profession they are asked to belong to.

The carved figures of "the Buddha," especially when they appear in London curio shops, have always a fascination for me. Unlike its Indian prototype, the Japanese idol is always stamped with a certain nobility, and is often not only very well modelled and carved, but ornamented with patterns of considerable beauty. I have in my mind's eye one shop in particular, in which rows of neglected Buddhas, stowed away on out-of-the-way shelves, always appeal to me. The smoke-begrimed countenances of some witness to the years, now long since past, when they placidly surveyed through rising incense the crowds which daily came to pay them homage, and they seem to cry out that below the dirt they retain all their pristine beauty. Others, more fortunate, are encased within natty shrines, and bring to mind recollections of homes far away bereft of their household gods. It may be a weakness of mine, but I can seldom come away from that shop without one of the images either under my arm or in my pocket.

There can hardly be any considerable number of persons outside the Buddhist faith who are able to pronounce with certainty as to the identity of these idols; they can only be recognised by the peculiar position of the hands, fingers, and legs. Shaka, which is the Japanese conception of S'âkya-muni, the Indian Buddha, is usually seated upon a lotus thalamus, resting his left hand upon his knee with the back downwards, and holding up his right hand with the palm forwards. He wears a jewel on his forehead. The same god, when in Nirvâna, lies on a raised bench. As a child he is

borne upon an elephant, which presents a lotus flower to him with its trunk.

Amida, according to Anderson the most popular Buddha in Japan, is supposed to reign over the Paradise of the West. He is a much later creation than Shaka, and is usually represented as one of a trinity composed of himself and his two sons. When alone his hands usually rest on his knees, palms upwards, fingers bent, so that the last two joints of each are in contact with the corresponding parts of the opposite hand.



No. 24.—Kwan-non. From a Sword-Guard. (Gilbertson Collection.)

"The Buddha" is often depicted surrounded by a quantity of Bo-satsu, Bôdhisatvas, a numerous body of saints who have to pass through human existence once again before attaining to Buddhaship.

Kwan-non, who rules over Paradise with Amida, has long been a popular divinity in Japan, maybe because there are so few goddesses in the Pantheon. In shrines and paintings will be found depicted eight varieties of the seven Kwan-nons,

namely, Senshu, or the thousand-handed; usually has forty, two of which on the lap always clasp the begging bowl. Bato, or the horse-headed, has four pairs of arms, and a figure of a horse's head on her brow. Inichi, or the eleven-faced; right



No. 25.—Kwan-non, after Hokusai.

hand open and extended downwards, left carries lotus or vase. Sho-kwanze-on, or the Holy; right hand elevated, with fore-finger and thumb touching, left carrying lotus. Ni-o-rin, or the omnipotent; four arms, one of the right supports the cheek, one of the left holds a lotus. Juntei, with many arms,

one carrying a sword. Fukuken, eight-armed; first pair in attitude of prayer, second carry staff and lotus, third open, fourth carry willow and rope. Gorin, or willow, two-handed, generally carries a willow in hand.*

In Murray's Guide we meet with descriptions of temples dedicated to Kwan-non oftener than any other god or goddess. She is also represented sometimes holding a child in her arms, seated on a rock by the sea-shore, accompanied by a dragon, as in our illustration (No. 24). Sometimes she appears in male form.

Ji-zō, or the patron of travellers, the helper of all in trouble, the protector of pregnant women and children, is naturally a popular deity. He is usually represented with a pilgrim's staff (Shaku-jō) in one hand and a ball (wisdom) in the other. In Murray's "Japan" it is stated that his image is frequently converted into a sign-post and covered with pebbles which serve in the other world to relieve the labours of infants who are robbed of their clothes, and Sō-dzu-kawa, a hag who sets them the endless task of piling up stones on the banks of the river of that name, which is the Buddhist Styx.

Besides all these there are to be found in Japanese Art frequent representations of a series of ugly and uninteresting divinities who become quite wearisome by their similarity, each seated, with shaven polls surrounded by a nimbus, and merely distinguishable from one another by their having as an accompaniment some appendage, such as a tiger, dragon, a futsujin or fly-brush, or a nio-i or sacred wand curved and surmounted by a trefoil. These personages are termed Rakan or Arhats; they are sixteen in number. If any one should by any possibility require further information respecting them, he will find their portraits and names in Mr. Anderson's Catalogue, page 46.

Of not much greater interest are the Rishis or Sennins, a very numerous and frequently depicted set of personages, who can neither be properly called spirits, or genii, or divinities. According to one authority they are persons who do

* I am indebted to the Rev. S. Coode Hore for these interesting particulars upon a shrine in my possession.

not die, but who, when they reach old age, retire from the haunts of men for contemplation and to practise austerity. According to another, they are beings who enjoy rest for a lengthened period after death, being for a time exempt from transmigration. Mr. Anderson traces the originals of the majority of those favoured by Japanese artists to a Chinese work which was reprinted in Japan in 1657. Those most



No. 26.—Kinko, a Rishi. From a Sword-Guard.
(Gilbertson Collection.)

commonly repeated are Chōkwarō, who conjures miniature horses out of a gourd; Tekkai, a beggar, who emits his spirit, also in miniature, out of his mouth; Kanshōshi, who floats on a hollow trunk; Rōshi, a little old man who rides an ox; Gama Sennin, the commonest of all, a beggar, accompanied by a toad, which usually sits on his head; Ōshikiō, who rides a white crane; Kanzan and Jitoku, also one of the most usual, two boys laughing over a roll, the latter usually carrying a

besom; Rihaku, gazing at a waterfall; and Kinkō, reappearing to his disciples, rising, as he had foretold, from the river on the back of a winged carp or koi (see Illustration No. 11).

Actualities who resemble some of the foregoing are the mendicant priests, who are frequently introduced into popular prints. They may be recognised by carrying a pole covered with little bells, and a lacquered vessel for rice. Sometimes



No. 26A.—*Shaka. From a Wood Carving in the Author's Collection.*

they have on their backs a paper shrine about a yard high in which is an idol. Illustrations of these shrine cases supported on legs are often found on lacquer.

There still remain to be noted the gods of good fortune and a number of supernatural beings, deified and mythical heroes, animals, and demons. Information concerning these will be found in the two succeeding chapters.



No. 26B.—*The Gods of Good Fortune after a night's revelling. From a Pouch Ornament.* (*Author's Collection.*)

CHAPTER IV.

THE GODS OF GOOD FORTUNE.

BESIDES the deities actually appertaining to Buddhism and Shintōism, there are a legion of other supernatural beings which have been grafted on to one or other of the creeds. It is probable that the majority of them were found in the Pantheon of the country when Buddhism invaded it, and were taken up by the priests of that sect as an easy means of avoiding hostility, and at the same time of putting into tangible form hitherto intangible doctrines.

Mr. Anderson, in his Catalogue of Japanese paintings in the British Museum, than which there is no more useful book to the student of Japanese Art, gives the following classes of supernatural beings more or less connected with religion :—

(*a*) The seven Gods of Good Fortune. (*b*) The Arhats. (*c*) The Dragon, Tiger, etc. (*d*) The Rishis. (*e*) The Demons.

The divinities in the first of these classes are to be found everywhere throughout Japan ; one or other of them is to be seen in every house, almost upon every article in daily use ; in my collection of metal work certainly one hundred out of the one thousand pieces deal with them. Four of them come under the wing of Buddhism, namely, Bishamon, Benten, Daikoku, and Hotei, and to these a certain amount of reverence is paid ; the others are treated with an affectionate cordiality, and certainly in the present day receive no sort of veneration, but rather the reverse. As Mr. Anderson remarks, they owe their

vitality rather to the artist than the priest, and have received nearly the whole of their extended popularity and influence from their lay supporters.

It has been suggested with some probability* that these gods came into existence to supply a want. The people desired many temporal blessings; they therefore said, "Let us make gods who shall dispense them, and let these gods impose no slavish worship, no self-denial, no punishment for want of reverence; they shall not be of forbidding, but of pleasant aspect; we will worship them at home, without formal ritual, so we shall have no troublesome visits to pay to the temple, no priests to bribe, no threats affecting our future state. There shall be no impropriety in asking for luck at cards, or good fortune in our amours." Accordingly each family sets up one or other of these deities in its living-room, and pays to them a simple but nowadays meaningless homage.



No. 27.—Juro. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

Around the deities have sprung up certain appendages, by which, more than by anything else, they are recognisable.

Fuku-roku-jiu, which translated means "wealth, prosperity, and longevity," is effigied as a little old man, clad in the dress of a sage. He is at once known by the sugar-loaf shape of his head, his vast brain having necessitated a capacious cranium. He usually carries a twisted, knotted stick, from which depends a manuscript roll; above him floats a crane, at his side is a deer, at his feet a tortoise, in his hand a sacred gem. The crane and the tortoise (see Chapter V.) are emblematic of longevity; the sacred gem typifies wealth.

Jurō, or Jurō-jin, the god of longevity, is hardly to be dis-

* Audsley, "Keramic Art," page 91.

tinguished from Fuku-roku-jiu, and is probably only a variation of his comrade. He too, as in Mr. Gilbertson's old Netsuké (Illustration No. 27), usually carries a staff to which a roll is tied by a string, and also a fan. His head attains to a height not less surprising than his companion's, but it is usually covered with a transparent cap. He is also generally of graver mien than Fuku. The bamboo, plum, and pine, all emblems



No. 28.—Ebisu. From a Sword-Guard. (Gilbertson Collection.)

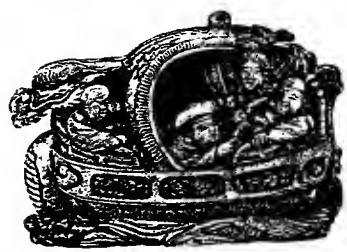
of longevity, will be found upon sword-guards and in pictures as a fitting background to his figure.

Ébisu was the son of Isanaghi and Isanami (see Chapter II., page 21), but his royal parentage has not given him a higher station than his fellows. He is a cripple, but that does not have any effect upon his jocularity, for he is termed "the smiling one." He is the god of daily food, and particularly of that very considerable portion of it which in Japan is derived from the sea. He is generally represented with rod and basket

struggling with a tai. See the sword-guard (Illustration No. 28), and note how cleverly the bamboo rod frames the subject.

Hotei has been to a certain extent adopted by the Buddhists. Mr. Anderson considers him the least dignified of the party, as he is the greatest favourite. No one who sees the representations of him can doubt this. He is always very fat (fatness is admired in Japan), half-clothed, enveloped in a big bag, after which he is named (*ho-tei*, cloth bag), and accompanied by children, of whom he is supposed to be very fond. His bag may also contain the "Precious Things," but it is used indiscriminately for sleeping in, catching children in, and other purposes.

In Mr. Gilbertson's Netsuké (Illustration No. 29) will be seen the Treasure Ship which comes into harbour every New Year's Eve, laden like Father Santa Claus with all sorts of good things, which in Japan are personated by the Takara-mono, or "Precious Things." These comprise the inexhaustible purse, the precious jewel, the hammer, the hat of invisibility, the lucky rain coat, the sacred key, the weight, the clove, and the "shippo."



No. 29.—The Treasure Ship. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

Daikoku is a Japanese, but has also been adopted by the Buddhists. He is probably the most important of the Gods of Good Fortune, for is he not the one who brings prosperity in his train? In the two representations which we give of him most of his attributes will be seen. In one he is holding the miner's mallet used for the acquisition of mineral wealth, and the bag which contains the Takara-mono. Beneath his feet are rice bales, indicative of wealth arising from the products of the soil. His broad cap, too, painted black, has its meaning; his long-lobed ears are a mark of beauty. On the other sword-guard he is represented as a merchant look-

ing through a satisfactory balance sheet; the lid of the box, which contains the ledger, bears the title, "This is the prosperous shop." He often is accompanied by a rat (see Chapter X.).

Miss Bird states that she cannot recall a house in which Daikoko does not appear in larger or smaller form, but that the moral taught by his figure has long been forgotten.

Bishamon Ten can trace his derivation to a Hindoo deity. In Japan he is the god of wealth, and his true followers will



No. 30.—*Daikoku. From a Sword-Guard.* (*Author's Collection.*)

quickly obtain fortune, wisdom, long life, and pleasures. Many authors consider him to be the god of war, but Mr. Anderson considers that this arises from his fierce looks and martial guise, and that he is not especially associated with military glory. Bishamon was incorporated into the Buddhist Pantheon very shortly after its introduction into Japan, and he, in company with Benten, Daikoku, and Hotei, were carved and painted in most gorgeous array. But latterly, the artists have been taking away his reputation even to the extent of exhibiting him making love to Benten over his

cups. He is usually habited in armour, and holds a halbert in one hand and a padoga in the other.

Benten (or Ben-zai-ten) is supposed to be a Japanese version of a Brahmanic goddess, but opinions differ as to which. In Buddhistic Art she is represented under the most varied forms, even as a many-armed goddess, often seated on a rock with a dragon beneath her, and sometimes surrounded by her sons, who are to be recognised by various symbols (see



No. 31.—Daikoku. From a Sword-Guard. (*Author's Collection.*)

Anderson's Brit. Mus. Cat., p. 43); but in secular painting, with which we have principally to do, she usually wears a small tiara, a flowing robe, and carries a stringed instrument (samisen). On her crown she has a white snake, which is a woman condemned to pass one thousand years in that guise for her sins. She is worshipped in an especial manner at various places, but Miss Bird narrates that when she visited her principal temple it was almost deserted.

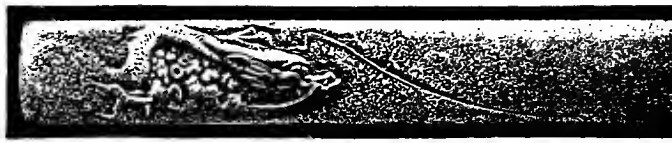
The Japanese popular artist usually endeavours to make his goddess as good-looking as possible, for excepting Kichi-jo-ten,* Ama-terasu, Quannon, and Uzumé, she is the only lady amongst the divinities whom he is called upon to portray. When depicted in company with her companion gods, it usually is as the musician of the party.

In the pouch ornament (Illustration p. 47) five of the seven gods, Daikoku, Fuku-roku-jiu, Hotei, Bishamon, and Jurō, are to be seen making night hideous with their shoutings as they return home in a very jovial condition.

* Sister of Bishamon, usually represented standing, and casting around her sacred gems (And., Brit. Mus. Cat. p. 45).



No. 32.—Benten, from an Okimono in the Gilbertson Collection.



No. 33.—The Spiritual Dragon. From a Kodzuka. (Author's Collection

CHAPTER V.

MYTHICAL BEINGS AND ANIMALS.

In previous chapters we have had principally to do with goc of good intent, who are happily more prominent in Japanes Art than evilly disposed ones. The Japanese religion differ from the majority of others, in havin but a small portion of its Pantheon se apart for this latter category, and w seldom find in the older and highe walks of Art an inclination to dwe upon the horrors of the Inferno. Th Jap is too good-humoured and self-satis fied to be influenced or terrified by th pains of the hereafter. With him "suff cient for the day is the evil thereof, and he meets even the demons with smile and a joke. At the entrance t the so-called Japanese village in Londo there were two ghastly pictures of th torments undergone by the wicked i Hell; they would not have discredite a German artist of the Middle Age for inventiveness as regards variety o torture. In the British Museum collection, too, there is a set of kakemonos representing the various grades of Hell These belong to the Buddhist school, and are said to b copies of originals dating from the ninth century. But



No. 34.—Kiyo-himé with the Monk An-chin. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

Europeans fortunately are usually spared this phase of Japanese Art. The collection of over two thousand objects exhibited at The Fine Art Society's only contained three representations of Yemma, or Emma Ō, the King of Hades, and



No. 35.—Exorcising an Oni, after Hokusai.

none of any portion of his domains.* The exhibition included

* His attributes are a cap like a judge's béret, and a huge mace. Before him sit two myrmidons, one of whom has a pen to write down the sins of human beings, whilst the other reads out the list of offences from

however, many a score illustrations of the *Oni*, or demons, which, if we may judge from Art, are more of an amusement than a nuisance to those around whom they hover. These Oni may have originally been human beings. For instance, Kiyo-himé, once an innkeeper's daughter, fell in love with a monk by name An-chin. Her passion not being returned, became so strong that it transformed her into a demoness, and as such she is depicted in our Illustration. Could her back be seen, it would be found that she had assumed a dragon's tail. The story goes that the monk, in order to avoid her importunities, had at last to hide himself under his monastery bell; but even here he could not escape, for with her tail and the bell-hammer Kiyo-himé beat it until, becoming red-hot, unfortunate An-chin was reduced to a cinder. (See Murray's "Japan," p. 187.)



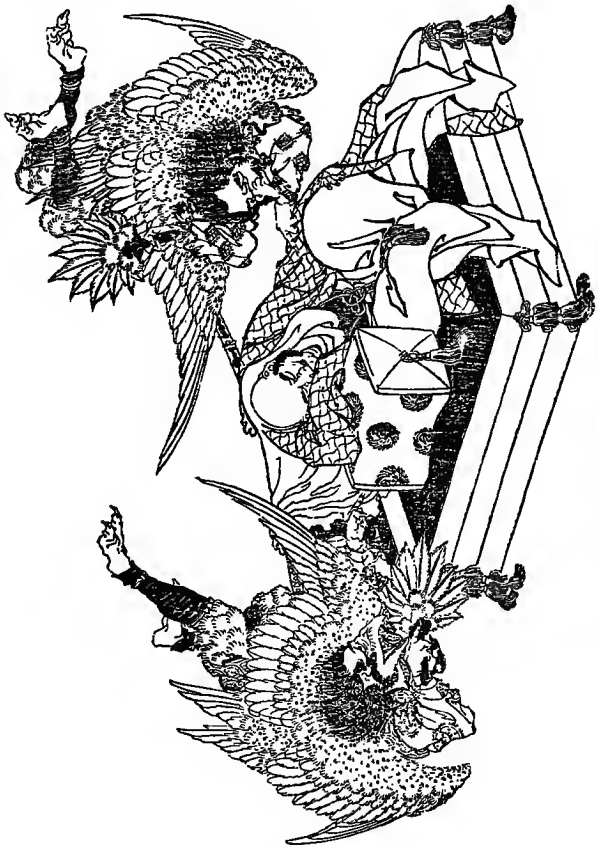
No. 36.—Shō-ki sharpening his Sword.

But more usually these Oni are merely mischievous imps which haunt the precincts of houses, and require on certain festivals to be warned off or exorcised. On New Year's day special attention seems to be paid to them, and they are pelted off the premises with showers of beans as shown in Illustration No. 35.* Onis are a frequent subject for the Japanese artist, especially in Netsukés; so, too, is Shō-ki (Ch: Chung Kwei), a personage who has been handed on

a roll. He is evidently derived from the Brahmin god Yama. The souls of the dead are judged by him and sent back to this world either in a higher or lower sphere according to deserts. "He who has toiled as a slave may re-appear a prince; he who has ruled as a king may wander in rags."

* We also see here the straw rope (shimé) which is hung over the house door at the New Year to keep disease and evil from entering. It is said to have its origin in Susanō (see p. 21), who once, in return for a service, instructed a peasant, one Sō-min, in this method of keeping out the plague god.

by the Chinese. He was engaged by an emperor of the Ming dynasty, in the eighth century, to quell the demons which infested the imperial palace, and many are the variations, for the most part comical, in which he is represented in every



No. 37.—The Dream of Sagami, after Hokusai.

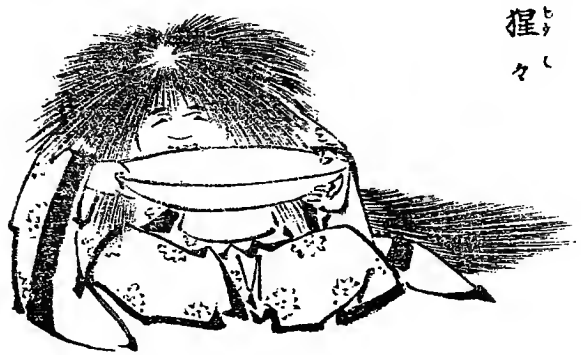
branch of Art. The "demon-queller" usually seems to be having a rough time, and a very trying one to his temper.

Somewhat akin to the Oni are the Tengus. They may be called wood sprites. According to Mr. Anderson they are of

two kinds. Ordinary with human face and form, but with wings and a very long nose, and avial, with a bird-like head and claws. They are apparently harmless. Yoshi-tsuné learning to fence from the Tengu king, and young Kin-toki catching Tengus, are frequent subjects.

Specimens of both kinds of Tengus are to be seen in the reproduction of Hokusai's print (Illustration No. 37), where a great Japanese celebrity, with the easily to be spelt and remembered name of Sa-gami-niu Dō Taira no Taka Toki is being troubled in his dreams by the attendance of Tengus.

Space will only allow of mention being made of another race



No. 38.—A Shō-jō, after Sensai.

of mythical creatures, the Shō-jōs; these harmless beings are held up to Japanese children as examples of the fatal effects of drink. It appears that they have such an inordinate affection for saké, that whenever jars of this beverage are placed on the seashore they cannot resist it; they are caught when hopelessly drunk, and their long red hair and blood are used for the valuable dyes which are extracted from them. "As drunk as a Shō-jō" is a Japanese proverb. The engraving (No. 38) shows one of these creatures in a state of intoxication.

We must now pass on to mythical animals, of which there are several which become quite wearisome by their repeated use in Japanese ornament.

At the head of these is the Dragon (Tatsu or Riō). It is not perhaps utilised by the Japanese quite as frequently as by the Chinese; but they, like Western nations, have not failed to appreciate the wonderful adaptability of its writhing body to all manner of ornament. The Japanese monster reached Japan through China, and is said to have originated in the Indian serpent. Probably the European dragon has the same parentage. According to Mr. Anderson the Japanese



No. 39.—*Shō-jō dancing, after Hokusai.*

dragon is a composite monster with scowling head, long straight horns, a scaly serpentine body, a bristling row of dorsal spines, four limbs armed with claws, and curious flame-like appendages on its shoulders and hips. The claws are usually three on each foot, but are sometimes four and even five.

Japanese fairy stories are as full as our own of the doings of dragons, but they usually have a more benignant character

than those which our children read about. In "Griffis's Fairy World" we have the child of the thunder, who, when he grew up turned into a white dragon and disappeared in the clouds; the myriads of dragons round Mount Fuji; the carp which for its perseverance in ascending a waterfall became a dragon; and the dragon king of the world under the sea.

The Buddhists have not hesitated to incorporate this monster into their system, and, as we saw in our last chapter, it is frequently found in attendance upon their goddesses Kwannon (see Illustration, p. 42) and Benten, and their Rakan. In their temples votaries may be seen prostrating themselves before large gaudily painted paper dragons. It holds the post of Protector of the Faith. It also represents the majesty of the Emperor.



No 40.—Netsuké in form of a Temple Bell. (Gilbertson Collection).

Mayers gives four kinds of Chinese dragons. The celestial dragon which guards the mansion of the gods; the spiritual dragon which causes the winds to blow and has the rainfall in his keeping; the earth dragon which marks out the course of rivers, and the dragon of hidden treasures which watches over the wealth concealed from mortals. It will be noted that the dragon is usually accompanied by a ball of varied form, but usually spherical. This is the gem of omnipotence. The yellow dragon is the most honoured of its kind.

The Japanese artist uses the dragon in every possible way for the purposes of adornment. As the holder for a fan, the gem forming the knob of the rivet, as the handle to a spoon, as a pouch ornament, upon sword guards, as a handle to bells (see Illustration No. 40).

The Tiger (Ko or Tora) has also been imported by the Buddhists from India, *viâ* China; it is considered the king

of the beasts, and is said to live a thousand years, but not being indigenous to the country, artists are seldom happy in portraying it. It is very often depicted in a storm cowering beneath the bamboo grass; symbolising the insignificant power of the mightiest of beasts, as compared with that of the elements.

The Ho, or Ho-ho, is more frequently drawn than almost any other bird, and from its being a combination of several, is almost invariably wrongly named by foreigners. The South Kensington authorities are as great sinners in this respect as any.* According to Mayers, it has "the head of a pheasant, the beak of a swallow, the neck of a tortoise, and the outward



No. 41.—*Ho. From a Pouch Ornament.* (*Author's Collection.*)

semblance of a dragon." This may be so in Chinese Art; but the Japanese artists usually make it up as a decoction of pheasant, bird of paradise, and peacock, treating its tail as regards shape and colour just as it suits their design. Further reason for its frequency in Art, besides its capability

* If any proof was wanted as to the lack of information upon Japanese Works of Art, it would be found in the descriptions attached to the articles in the South Kensington Museum. Half-a-dozen errors may be counted in a single case of exhibits. For instance: a piece of metal work ornamented with a Ho and clouds is described as "animals, &c.," and a Kylin is styled upon one piece a "Kylin or dragon," on another "a lion." The Tokugawa Crest is called "the Imperial Kiri," and Kwanyu as "a man draped, carrying a bill or glaive."

of artistic treatment, is, that its presence is significant of good in the near future; consequently it has usually appeared at the birth of those who afterwards attained to fame.

The *Kirin*, a miserable combination of a deer (as to its body), a dragon (as to its head), and a lion (as to its mane and tail), is fortunately seldom met with in Art. It is, however, said to be the "noblest form of the animal creation, and an emblem of perfect good; it treads so lightly as to leave no footprints, and so cautiously as to crush no living creature." (Anderson, B. M. C., p. 220.)

Another monster which was alluded to in the first chapter, is the great earthquake-fish Namazu. It resembles a dolphin, but has a huge mouth with feelers. A giant, Kashima, is appointed to watch over it, and when it becomes too violent and shakes the earth, he has to jump upon it with the rock (Kaname, *i.e.* the rivet of a fan) which holds the earth together, and keep it quiet. The Namazu is not a very common object in Japanese Art, but more than one artist has devoted a whole volume to depicting its vagaries.



No. 42.—Lion Dog with the Sacred Gem. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

The Tortoise (Kamé) is one of the four sacred supernatural creatures, the others being the dragon, tiger, and ho.

The marvellously realistic representations of the reptile which have been produced in bronze by Sei-min or by the ivory carver, do not represent the supernatural tortoise. This is almost always invested with a hairy tail of considerable proportions, in evidence of its being of a great age, for that appendage does not grow until it is at least five hundred years old. So it poses as the emblem of longevity, and when in addition it bears the mountain of the immortals, it is figurative of strength. The origin of this tail is curious. Tortoises in

Japan are subject to a growth of parasites, in the shape of *confervæ*, a plant which attaches itself to its shell. This, when the animal swims about, surrounds the under part of its back with long green locks called *mino gamé* from its resemblance to the grass coat worn by peasants in rainy weather.

The Lion (Shi-shi) is not, I believe, a sacred animal in the eyes of the Japanese, although it is very often depicted as playing with or holding the sacred gem. No one would recognise it from its portraits, for it is indued with so curly a mane and tail, and tufts to its legs, which make its body quite a secondary appendage. It is of Corean origin, and usually figures in connection with a peony plant (see Illustration No. 42) They together symbolise regal power.

Other animals, such as foxes, which have supernatural attributes, will be treated of in the chapter upon animals.

CHAPTER VI.

SOCIETY IN JAPAN.

HAVING completed our glance at the land of Japan, its history and religions, our attention will be directed towards some of the queries which arise out of almost every representation which we encounter of the personalities and the manners and customs of the inhabitants of that country.

As yet the Japanese artist has confined himself to the delineation of his countrymen as they existed prior to the introduction of Western fashions. Some of the illustrations to this chapter show how these are invading the land, but they are furnished from a foreign source. The long line of native artists whose works, extending over several centuries, are preserved to us, were always conservative and restrained by traditions. They loved to dwell upon the glories of the past and to limn the lineaments of those who have become illustrious in their nation's history. It was not until early in the last century, after many years of profound peace, and when the people had apparently tired of the constant repetition of the doings of their deities and warriors, that any variation occurred. The fashion then arose for popular actors to have their portraits executed in their most gorgeous dresses and acting their favourite plays. Chromo-xylography having just come to the front the artist was enabled to do some justice to the magnificent wardrobes which have for centuries been, and still are, the pride of the principal theatres. So, too, the delineation of the Japanese in his rags

as well as in his finery was thought of, and to artists taken from amongst the *plebs* themselves we owe those photographic portraits of humble life which give us almost all the information we can

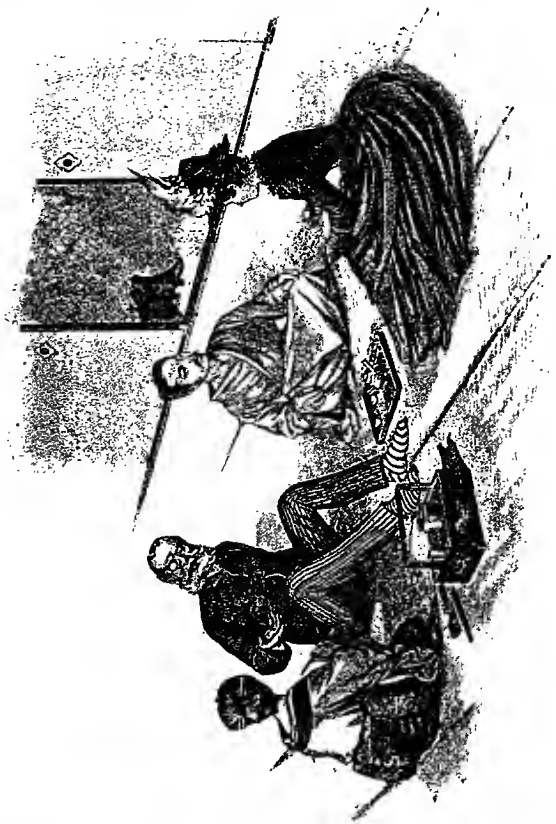


No. 43.—Japanese Workmen and Conjurors. From Hokusai's Mangwa.

desire concerning it. Had it not been for these we might have imagined that everybody in Japan was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

The principal source, undoubtedly, from whence we gather

our ideas upon Japanese life is the illustrated books* and leaflets which now find their way here in such prodigious numbers. Little of what they contain can be understood by those who are strangers to the language, but that little can



No. 41.—*A Fashionable Call. From "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan."*

be increased by a comprehension of the social status, dress, and habits of the society which they illustrate.

* It may be worth while to mention that Japanese books commence at what to us is the end: a remembrance of this is a great aid to their unravelling.

Let us then consider what these are, or I should say were, for I shall only deal with them as they existed prior to the Revolution of 1868.

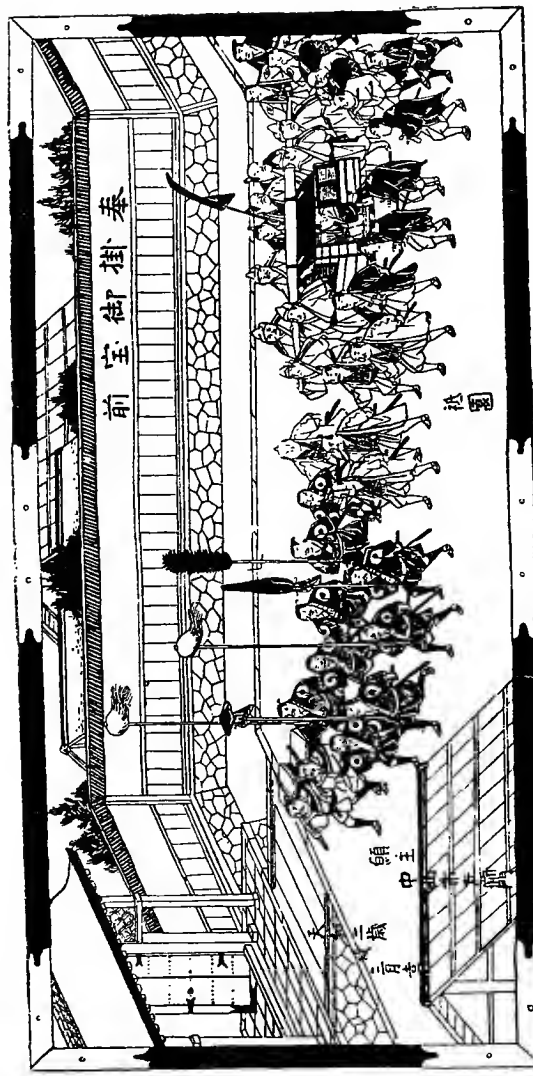
The effigy of the Mikado seldom finds a place in Art. The rôle assumed by him and his surroundings was that he was too far above ordinary mortals to be spoken of or written about; his face was hidden from the view of his subjects and his portrait can always be recognised by his legs and feet only being seen below a sort of Venetian blind made of bamboo. The Shōgun, on the contrary, frequently appears in Art.

The dual government which existed between the Mikado and Shōgun has been already explained (Chapter II. page 27). We will therefore commence our survey of society with the next grade, namely, the Daimios, each of whom was a feudal lord, king in all but name of his own territory, and with a revenue which in many instances amounted to a quarter of a million sterling. These maintained both at their town and country palaces a small army of retainers, and the pomp, display, colour and movement recorded by their frequent progresses through the country must have been a feast for the artistic eye. A representation of a visit of ceremony is portrayed at page 68, and it is a frequent subject in the adornment of screens, walls of houses, and the makimono or illustrated rolls.

Besides these there was at the court of the Mikado a nobility consisting of 155 families, all affecting imperial descent; these, from being for twelve centuries the governing class, lost both power and possessions by the advent to power of the Shōgun. Many of them pursued the profession of Art; their poverty was a frequent theme for the caricaturist.

Next in order came the military, who filled most of the offices of state. At the time of the Revolution these numbered about two out of the thirty-six million inhabitants. The position occupied by this body could only be explained at great length, but it cannot be passed over, for its doings are always cropping up in Art.

For a thousand years the people of Japan have been divided by law into two classes, the military and the civil. The former during all that period have not only monopolised arms, but the



No. 45.—A Visit of Ceremony. From a sixteenth-century picture.

literature, the patriotism and the intellect of the country. This division produced the *Samurai*, who at his best was all that was ideal in a man. To support him and his, the country was taxed to the extent of nearly four millions a year, an imposition which was only commuted in 1876. As the *Samurai's* code



No. 46.—*Suke-tsuné, a Japanese General.*

of honour would not allow him to work or engage in business, it is not surprising to hear that the majority of them were idle fellows, who only obeyed their lord, whom they protected on the battle-field, or against his murderers, and for whom they were willing at any time to die, even by their own hand,

if honour required it. In the novel "Chinshingura," which is written in praise of Japanese chivalry, we find a proverb quoted—

"Slaughter and rapine, Samurai's daily deeds!"

Upon festive occasions they appeared very bravely dressed, not perhaps quite so cap-à-pie as the general in our illustration, but not a great way removed from him in point of magnificence. There were several ranks amongst them, such as banner supporters, horsemen, etc. It is difficult to believe that such a cumbrous uniform was worn later than what we should term the Middle Ages. But the isolation of Japan prevented her utilising the discoveries of modern warfare, and her soldiery were arrayed almost precisely like this until well within the memory of some now living. The dress need not be described, for there are few curiosity shops which are without a suit, and a very fair one may be purchased for about £3. Many of the old helmets included in such suits are marvels of workmanship. As avengers of their lord's murder, these Samurai appear over and over again in Japanese Art. They are distinguishable in their ordinary dress by their wearing on their kimono, on each sleeve, between the shoulders, and on each side of the breast, the family badge; also short hose reaching below the calves. But carrying two swords was their great and most prized privilege and even their young children were indulged with imitation ones. "The sword is the soul of the Samurai" is a Japanese motto. This may well be, when their other equally-prized privilege was the Harakiri, or Happy Despatch, for which their second and shorter sword was kept. This terrible mode of suicide is also a frequent subject in pictorial art. The ceremony is given in detail in Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan."

The *Samurai* is now a being of the past. The places in which he once swaggered know him no more; his home has been razed and its site converted into pasturage (Murray's "Japan," page 190).

As the warrior was to all outward appearance a very different sort of being to his descendant of to-day, so the lady

whom the artist has delighted to delineate as the belle of his mediæval story, differs from those of her sex who now people the cities. The lady in the picture books is not handsome, but that was not the fault of the model, but of a system which compelled the artist to draw her features after certain rules which he dare not transgress. Examine any one of the volumes of celebrated beauties, and they are all precisely alike. Two slits, very far apart, for eyes; two black bars high up on her forehead to serve the place of her shaved-off eyebrows; a long, slightly aquiline nose, and tiny mouth, and a long, oval, swollen-cheeked countenance. She wears a trailing robe of silks of the most varied patterns, and her raven tresses sweep the ground.

The various highly ornamented articles which we encounter witness to how this lady passed her time. The fukusas show her skill with the needle; the kobako witnesses to her favourite pastime of the perfume-game (of which we shall speak farther on); and her cards, the pleasure she experienced in writing stanzas of poetry. Whilst the male sex devoted themselves to the study of Chinese, the females pursued their native tongue, with the result that a large proportion of the best writings of the best age of Japanese literature is the work of women.

It has often been remarked that the Japanese as represented in books and those we see in the flesh in Europe have but little resemblance. The reason is this: in Japan, as in many other countries, the race is divided into two almost distinct families; the nobility, descended from the gods, with long visage, pale complexion, high forehead, aquiline nose, small mouth, and eyes placed obliquely; this family is found in the environs of Kyōto and the province of Yamato, which is the cradle of the race; it is the one which all the painters, save the popular ones, have, with but little variation, taken as their model. The other branch, which inhabits the western side of the empire, facing China, have a short face, olive complexion, low forehead, projecting cheek bones, snub nose, eyes horizontally placed and widely opened. There is a third family of Ainus, but these inhabit the northernmost island of the empire,

where Art has never yet penetrated, and consequently any delineation of their forms or features seldom finds a place on Japanese wares. The women when they marry shave off the eyebrows and blacken the teeth.

As regards the size of the Japanese, it is quite the exception to find a big man, and still rarer a fine woman. Their average height is five feet, the females being somewhat less. As a rule they are strong, and able to undergo much fatigue, and feats of strength are much admired and envied. One of their principal amusements is wrestling, which is also very commonly portrayed in Art.

Miss Bird is very severe on the looks of the people. She states that in her peregrinations, extending over 1,400 miles, she saw nothing even resembling passable good-looks. But a gallant officer (Major Knollys) writes very differently in his "Sketches of Life in Japan," and so does the observant Rein, who says, "In reality the female sex is more beautiful than the ideal of native artists."

A constant source of complaint with European critics of Japanese Art is that the human figure is never drawn correctly, and they querulously ask why should not the same brush which can model with such marvellous accuracy the lower order of creation, be able to portray that other part of it which the artists of the Western hemisphere have always held to be the highest type of beauty, and have always ardently striven to accomplish successfully? They who complain have little knowledge of the surroundings under which work is produced.

Let us shortly compare the opportunities which a Japanese and a European artist have of modelling the human figure.

The European starts with a conviction that the human figure is the most glorious piece of God's handiwork. He has constantly before him not only perfect specimens in flesh and blood, but ideal creations of the genius of former ages. In his schools he has the anatomy of each component part explained to him, and he has to pass through a long course of study of the skeleton and the subcutaneous portions of the body before he arrives at a stage when he may draw it clothed in flesh.

The Japanese, on the other hand, is taught by his religion that the human body is a vile carcase of no worth, a frail and corrupt mass, which is only destined to rot and waste away. Taking the average of the specimens of humanity which he sees around him, it would perhaps be hard to believe otherwise. In his schools he is only allowed to study from the works of the old masters, who had a certain formula by which to draw the human frame. Whereas the savants of his country are versed in the anatomy and properties of every flower of the field, they are absolutely ignorant of the component parts of the human frame, so he has nothing from which he can learn it.*

There is every reason to affirm that had the Japanese the same facilities and inducements as have our artists, he could show them the way to draw the human figure almost as perfectly as he now does the birds and the flowers. As a proof of this, I would point to the fact that the sculptors, who have apparently been restrained by no traditions, often limn it perfectly. There is little fault either to be found with the work of the draughtsmen of the popular schools who learnt upon lines of their own framing.

The dress of the people of all classes is similar in shape, but with certain variations of cut which mark the rank of the wearer. The usual and often the only garment, both male and female, is the *kimono*, which opens down the front, the neck being exposed, and resembles our dressing-gown. It is kept in place by a sash (*obi*), which is the principal adornment, especially of the ladies; it is wound round the body more than once, and is tied behind in a very large and carefully formed butterfly bow with long streamers. This belt held the swords. The large and wide sleeves form bags in which are kept (*inter alia*) a supply of paper to serve as pocket-handkerchiefs. The ladies' full-dress *kimono* has a train several feet in length, stiffened with wadding. Among the higher orders the summer *kimono* is of light cotton, the winter of heavy silk. At the latter season all classes wear trousers and stockings,

* I have a modern text-book on the subject, which is copied from a Dutch work on Anatomy, and is quite ludicrous in its incorrectness.

but these are usually only retained by well-to-do people in warm weather.

The styles of wearing the hair have been very varied. At one time the males shaved it from their foreheads to the



No. 47.—Saluting the New Costume. From "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan."

middle of the scalp, and bound the long cue into a top-knot which was turned forward and laid on the scalp. This was in order that the helmet might fit comfortably and that the hair might not cumber the eyes in fighting. This custom gradually

spread to all classes. The fashions as regards children were equally marked. In older representations their heads are shaved except a circlet of hair round their tonsure, or three locks on the crown. This is seen in Japanese dolls.

Any covering for the head is the exception, in spite of the heat of the sun. When one is worn, it is an almost flat, circular hat made of reeds, which is a protection against sun and rain. As a shelter from the latter, a straw-plaited coat fastened round the neck is used by the lower classes, as are cloaks of oiled paper and, of course, the umbrella. Cotton socks are worn, in which the big toe only is divided from the rest to serve as a holdfast for the strap of the rice-straw sandals, or of the clog. The former wear out very quickly, cost next to nothing, and can only be used in dry weather. Those which have been cast away litter everywhere the sides of the road. In wet weather wooden clogs, which raise the diminutive wearer a couple of inches, are worn.

Sandals are always taken off on entering a house, even if it be a shop, so as not to injure or dirty the dainty mats. Foreigners are continually hurting the feelings of the Japanese by a failure to observe this custom, which is not easily observed with lace-up boots. How awkward strangers look when they attempt it may be seen from the Illustration No. 44, taken from "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan,"* a most amusing and ably illustrated record of the country under existing circumstances.

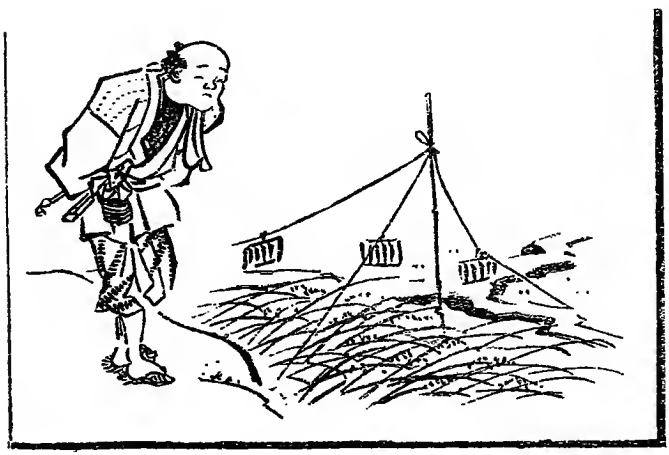
No notice of the dress of a Japanese would be complete without a mention of the fan, which is carried by every one from the generalissimo of the army to the scavenger. Gentlemen affect only white paper of the shape usually worn by ladies in the West, coloured ones and those of the leaf-shape being used by women and children. It is even utilised for passing things on, such as letters, or as a substitute for a plate.

The common people are divided into the following five classes—peasants, handicraftsmen, shopkeepers, Etas, or fol-

* Leipsig: T. O. Weigel.

lowers of unclean professions, and Geishas (female dancers and singers*) and Jôrôs (prostitutes).

The condition of the Japanese agricultural peasant or farmer, cut off as he has been from all chance of an improvement of his lot, has never been a happy one. Left to the soil to till it, to live and die upon it, he has remained the same to-day as he was when first his class was assigned the lower place. He is thus described by Mr. Griffis, who passed several years in the country :—"Like the wheat that he has planted for successive



No. 48.—*A Farmer surveying his Rice Crop.*

ages, the peasant, with his horizon bounded by his rice-fields, his watercourses, or the timbered hills, his intellect laid away for safe keeping in the priest's hands, is the son of the soil; caring little who rules him, unless he is taxed beyond the power of flesh and blood to bear, or an over-meddlesome officialdom touches his land, to transfer, sell, or redivide it: then he rises as a rebel. In time of war he is a disinterested and a passive spectator, for he does not fight." See him as depicted by a popular artist, in the above illustration, watching his rice-field.

* See Chapter VII., p. 93.

His clothing can in ordinary weather hardly be designated by that title. In this respect he differs from his neighbour the Corean, who is so bashful and self-conscious that even under the hottest sun he will not divest himself of a single garment. When the Japanese wears anything it is a brilliantly blue cotton kimono nearly reaching to the ground, with, in the case of the women, a scarlet sash.

Miss Bird states that: "It was somewhat remarkable to see telegraph wires above men whose only clothing was a sun hat and fan, and alongside their children returning from school well clothed, and with books and slates."

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOUSE AND ITS CUSTOMS.

THE Japanese house principally differs from that of other nations in its want of substantiality. It is fixed to no foundations, for it merely rests upon unhewn stones placed at intervals beneath it, and it usually consists of a panel-work of wood either unpainted or painted black on the exterior face; sometimes it is of plaster, but this is the exception. Its roof is either shingled, tiled,* or thatched with hay (*kaya*). No chimneys break its skyline, for fires are seldom used. Where they are, their smoke issues from a hole left at the top of the angle of the gable. The worst side of the house is usually turned towards the street, the artistic towards the garden. The houses, as a rule, evidence the fact that the nation is poor, and that the Japanese does not launch out beyond his means, or what he can reinstate when it is destroyed, as it most probably will be during his lifetime, by fire or earthquake. Two at least of the sides of the house have no permanent walls, and the same applies to almost every partition in the interior. These are merely screens fitting into grooves, which admit of easy and frequent removal. Those on the exterior, which are called shōji, are generally covered with white paper, so as to allow the light to penetrate; the shadows thrown upon these, when

* Tiles are often copied in miniature as ornaments, and those from famous buildings are much prized as curios both in China and Japan, being often used as inkstones (suzuri), on which to rub the Indian ink. An inkstone used by a celebrated calligraphist is much prized.



No. 49.—A Marriage Ceremony, after Utagowa Toyokuni. From Anderson's "Pictorial Arts of Japan."

the light is inside, find many a place in the pages of the caricaturists. The interior screens are of thick paper, and are usually decorated with paintings. The rooms in the house are for the most part small and low; one can almost always easily touch the ceilings. The size of each is planned out most accurately according to the number of mats which it will take to cover the floor. These mats are always of the same size, namely, about 72 inches by 36 inches.* The rooms are also rectangular and without recesses, save in the guest room, where there are two, called toko-noma and chigai-dana. In the toko-noma are hung the kakémono, or pictures, and on its floor, which is raised above the rest of the compartment, vases with flowers, an incense-burner, a figure of the household god, etc., are placed. In our illustration, where a middle-class wedding ceremony is taking place, there are three kakémono behind the chigai-dana, and their appropriateness will be recognised, for they illustrate the hairy-tailed tortoise, cranes, and Jurō-jin, all emblems of longevity. Weddings are celebrated at night, hence the use of the lanterns (*shokudai*) and the black sky outside; the bride is drinking saké from a cup, this being done several times by both parties; the other persons include the parents, and the go-betweens who have arranged the match; all are in full dress (*kamishimo*); in front of the bride is a wooden pedestal for placing the saké-cups upon; in front of the two bridesmaids in the foreground are bowls with handles, containing the saké, and ornamented with pairs of paper butterflies, emblematical of conjugal felicity. It may also be noted that on the cornice in which the shōji slide are depicted the takara-buné, or Precious Things (see p. 50); the table in the centre of the room has upon it a representation of the shore of Takasago, with the "pine of mutual old age," and figures of Giotomba, an old man and woman, who are the spirits of the pine; the pile of boxes on the left are supposed each to contain a thousand rio, the dowry, and are called senrio-bako; the shōji are withdrawn so as to open up a view of the street; the artist has adopted a common device of

* A Japanese never if he can avoid it sits without a mat (*tatami* or *goza*) beneath him. He even carries it out with him to picnics, etc.

getting over the difficulty of finishing off h... foreground by the assistance of clouds.*

The chigai-dana is used as a receptacle for everyth... we should put in a cupboard. As a rule it is fitted at t... with shelves, and below with a cupboard—the former for t... reception of the kakemono which are not in use, makemono or rolls, lacquer boxes, etc., and the latter for stowing away the bedding.

Almost every Japanese house has a verandah, which is almost a necessity where heavy rain is frequent and the sides of the house are composed of fragile materials such as the shōji. Round this verandah, therefore, wooden screens called amado are placed at night and in the rainy season; these are fixed into grooves, and slide along.

No expensive paintwork, in feeble imitation of the wood it covers, stands ready to chip and scratch and look shabby. Everything remains as it left the carpenter's plane, usually smoothed but not polished. If the workman thought the bark upon the wood was pretty, he would probably leave even this, and he would certainly make no attempt to remove any artistic markings caused by the ravages of a worm or larvæ.

Besides the guest room, there was usually a special room set apart for the cha-no-yu, or tea ceremony; this was not always in the building, but often in one apart from the house in the garden. I give from Mr. Frank's catalogue of the Ceramic Collection in the South Kensington Museum an account of this ancient ceremonial, for it has played a very important part in the history of the nation, has had much to do with the course of political events, and still more with the rigid observance of rules of etiquette, etc.

Two modes of conducting the ceremonies were observed—the winter and summer modes. In the former the garden was strewn with fir leaves, the guests retained their shoes, and the furnace for the kettle was a pit in the floor filled with ashes. In the latter, the garden was decked with flowers, the guests

* For a full account of the marriage rite see Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan," p. 364.

es, and a portable earthenware furnace (*furo*)

ide of the room was as plain as possible, though costly
might be employed if the means of the host admitted it.
ne hours fixed for the invitations were 4 to 6 A.M., noon, or
6 P.M. The guests, assembling in a pavilion (*machi-ai*) in the garden, announce their arrival by striking on a wooden tablet or bell, when the host himself or a servant appears to conduct them into the chamber. The entrance being only three feet square, the host kneels and lets the guests creep in before him. They being seated in a semicircle, the host goes to the door of the side room in which the utensils are kept, saying: "I am very glad you have come, and thank you much. I now go to make up the fire." He then brings in a basket (*sumi-tori*) containing charcoal in pieces of a prescribed length, a brush (*mitsu-ba*) made of three feathers, a pair of tongs (*hibashi*), the stand of the kettle (*kama-shiki*), iron handles for the kettle, a lacquer box* containing incense† (*kobako*), and some paper. He again leaves the chamber to bring in a vessel with ashes (*hai-ki*) and its spoon. He then makes up the fire and burns incense, to overpower the smell of the charcoal. While he is thus occupied, the guests beg to be allowed to inspect the incense-box, generally an object of value, which passes from hand to hand, and the last guest returns it to the host.

This closes the first part of the ceremony, and both host and guests withdraw.

The second part commences with eating, and, as it is a rule that nothing should be left, the guests carry off, wrapped up in paper, any fragments that remain. The utensils used in this part of the ceremony are as follows:—

1. An iron kettle (*kama*) with a copper or iron lid, resting on a stand (*kama-shiki*).

2. A table or stand (*daisu*) of mulberry wood, two feet high.

* This is used in the summer mode. In the winter a porcelain or earthenware box (*kogo*) is employed.

† In the winter odoriferous pastilles are burned, in the summer sandal-wood.

3. Two tea-jars (*cha-iré*) (see illustration) containing the fine powdered tea, and enclosed in bags of brocade.

4. A vessel containing fresh water (*mizu-sachi*), which is placed under the daisu.

5. A tea-bowl of porcelain or earthenware (*cha-wan*, or, when of large size, *temmoku*), simple in form, but remarkable for its antiquity or historical associations.

Besides these, there is a bamboo whisk (*cha-seu*); a silk cloth (*fukusa*), usually purple, for wiping the utensils; a spoon (*chashaka*), to take the tea out of the cha-iré; and a water-ladle (*shaku*). All these objects are brought in singly by the host in their prescribed order.

After solemn salutations and obeisances the utensils are wiped and some of the powdered tea is placed in the tea-bowl, hot water is poured on it, and the whole is vigorously stirred with the whisk until it looks like thin spinach; a boy then carries the bowl to the chief guest, from whom it passes round the party to the last, who returns it empty to the boy. The empty bowl is then passed round once more that the guests may admire it. The utensils are then washed by the host, and the ceremony is at an end.

The ceremonial described above is that known as the "Koicha," and Dr. Funk states that he was present on one of these occasions, when the tea-bowl and water-jar were exhibited with as much pride as old Corean; the host dilated on the age and origin of the various utensils, and mentioned, for instance, that the bag of one of the tea-jars was made from the dress of the celebrated dancer Kogaru, who lived in the time of Taiko Hidéyoshi.

These ceremonies were the cause of the large prices occasionally paid for the vessels of pottery used in them, especially while they were in the height of fashion; hence we hear that, in the time of Taiko Hidéyoshi, a single tea-bowl of Séto ware was sold for some thousand yen.* Good specimens may be met with occasionally in England

* A yen is about a dollar, 3s. 7d. The moneys are as follows:—
10 rin = 1 sen, rather less than ½d.
1,000 sen = 1 yen.

at about 25s. each. Care should be taken to obtain the old bag and box.

From these ceremonies it may be judged by what strict, self-imposed rules of etiquette the Japanese have been governed, and how conservative they have been regarding them. The cha-no-yu had its origin three hundred years ago. A code of rules was formulated for its observance, against



No. 50.—Séto Cha-iré. Sixteenth Century. (*Ernest Hart Collection.*)

which there was no appeal; it inculcated morality, good-fellowship, politeness, social equality, and simplicity. "The members of the association were," as Mr. Anderson says, "the critics and connoisseurs, whose dicta consecrated or condemned the labours of artist or author, and established canons of taste, to which all works, to be successful in their generation, must conform." The *séances* constituted symposia in which abstruse questions of philosophy, literature, and

art were discussed from the standpoint of acknowledged authority.

Persons in Japan who wish to start housekeeping are saved one great expense, namely, furnishing. No carpets, tables,



No. 51.—Tobako-bon. Eighteenth Century. (Ahrens Collection.)

bedsteads, wardrobes, or cupboards find a place in their requirements. Nor does the Japanese require chairs, for he is only comfortable when resting on his knees and heels on a cushion (*zabuton*); and he must have his hibachi, or fire vessel, and his tobako-bon, or tobacco tray. The hibachi is a portable fire-

place, which throws out a slight heat, and also serves as a source whence to light the pipe. It contains small pieces of charcoal. According to the exhaustive work of Professor Morse on "Japanese Homes," whenever a caller comes, the first act of hospitality, whether in winter or summer, is to place the hibachi before him. Even in shops it is brought in and placed on a mat when the visitor enters. At a winter party one is assigned to each guest, and the place where each is to sit is indicated by a square cloth cushion. Our illustration of the tobako-bon is from a beautiful specimen in natural wood, inlaid with irises in tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, and ivory; the mountings are in repoussé silver; it is eighteenth-century work, of the school of Yō-yu-sai. In common with the other pieces of household furniture given here, it is of superior workmanship, and similar objects would only be found in the houses of the very well-to-do. The tobako-bon is also handed to a visitor; it contains a small earthern jar for holding charcoal. The baskets used for holding the charcoal for the hibachi and tobako-bon are often very artistically made. The only other articles of furniture will be the kotatsu, a square wooden frame, which in winter is placed over the hibachi or stove, and is covered with a large wadded quilt or *futon* (under this the whole family huddle for warmth), the pillow (*makura*), and the lantern (*andon*) which feebly illumines the apartment. No Japanese would think of sleeping without having this burning throughout the night.

All houses were until lately lit at night by lanterns, but now paraffine lamps are driving them out and assisting to increase the fires. Owing to the frequent visitation of fire, to which Japanese towns and villages are subject, almost every house of any importance possesses a kura or "godown," a fireproof isolated building, in which all the valuables are kept. Fires are so constantly occurring that it is almost impossible to take up a number of a Japanese weekly paper without more than one notification that several hundred houses have been destroyed.

The consumption of lanterns in Japan is enormous, without counting the export trade. Every house has dozens for inter-

nal use and for going out at night. These latter are placed in a rack in the hall; each bears the owner's name in Chinese characters, or his crest, in red or black on a white ground. One burns outside most houses and shops, and every foot-passenger carries one. No festival is complete without thousands of them.

Smoking is an universal habit with the Japanese. It begins,



No. 52.—Mizu-sashi. (*Collection of Sir Chas. Dilke, Bart.*)

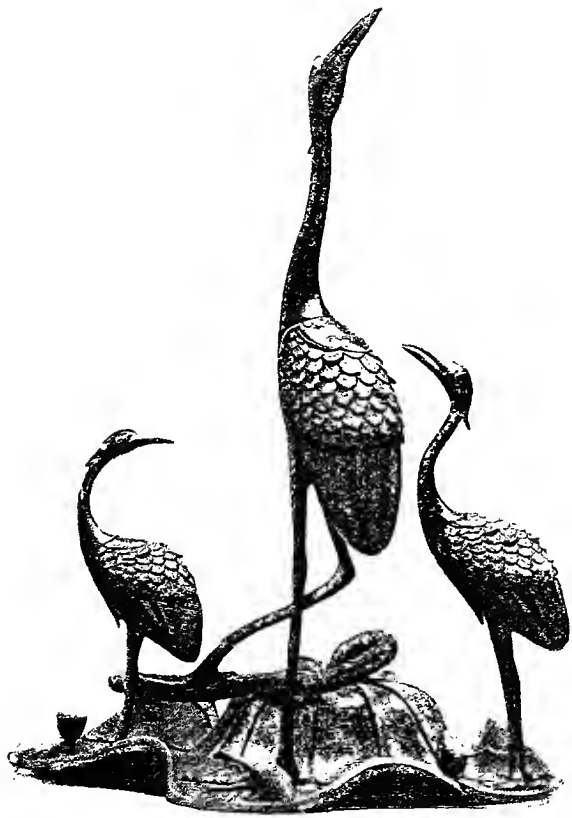
interrupts, and ends his day. The pipes used are very small in the bowl, and only hold sufficient tobacco for three or four whiffs; these are swallowed and expelled through the nostrils. In consequence of their tiny capacity they are often taken for opium pipes; upon them and the tobacco-pouch artists lavish all their skill.

Many, perhaps the majority, of the objects which come to Europe are utensils for food; it may, therefore, be interesting to describe a meal in a well-to-do house. Herr Rein says that each person is served separately on a small table or tray. For his solid food he uses chop-sticks, but his soup he drinks from a small lacquered bowl. Upon his table will be found a small porcelain bowl of rice, and dishes upon which are relishes of fish, etc.; a teapot, for the contents of which a saucer instead of a cup is used. The stimulants will be either tea (*cha*) or rice beer (*saké*). The tea is native green, and no milk or sugar is used; it is drunk on every possible occasion, and is even served when one visits a shop. The tea apparatus (*châ-dôgu*) is always in readiness in the living-room, viz., a brazier with live coals (*hibachi*), tray (*bon*), tea-pot (*dobin* or *chā-bin*), cups (*cha-wan*), and a tea-caddy (*cha-iré*). So too a labourer going to work carries with him a bento of lacquered wood for his rice, a kettle, a tea-caddy, a tea-pot, a cup, and chop-stick (*hashi*) (Junker's "Tea Customs in Japan"). The saké contains a certain amount of fusel oil, and is intoxicating; it is usually druuk warm from saké cups, which may be either of lacquer or porcelain. Rice being the principal condiment, a servant kneels uear by with a large panful, and replenishes the bowls as they are held out to her; it is eaten at almost every meal, the only substitute being groats made out of millet, barley, or wheat. Bread is seldom used. Other favourite edibles are gigantic radishes (*daikon*), which frequently figure in Art, lotus roots, young bamboo shoots, cucumbers, of which a single person will often consume three or four a day;* so, too, the dark violet fruit of the egg plant, and fungi (the subject of frequent illustration) are eaten at almost every meal. With fruits the Japanese is sparsely supplied; his grapes, peaches, pears, and walnuts will not compare with Western specimens, but the persimmon, with which the ape is always associated, and which is always cropping up in fairy stories, a brilliant orange-coloured fruit, the size of an apple, is common enough; the tree grows to a

* From these and from gourds are made the hour-glass shaped saké bottles, which so often find a place in pictures.

large size, and holds its fruit in the autumn even after it has lost its leaves.

The wife eats separately from her husband, in another room

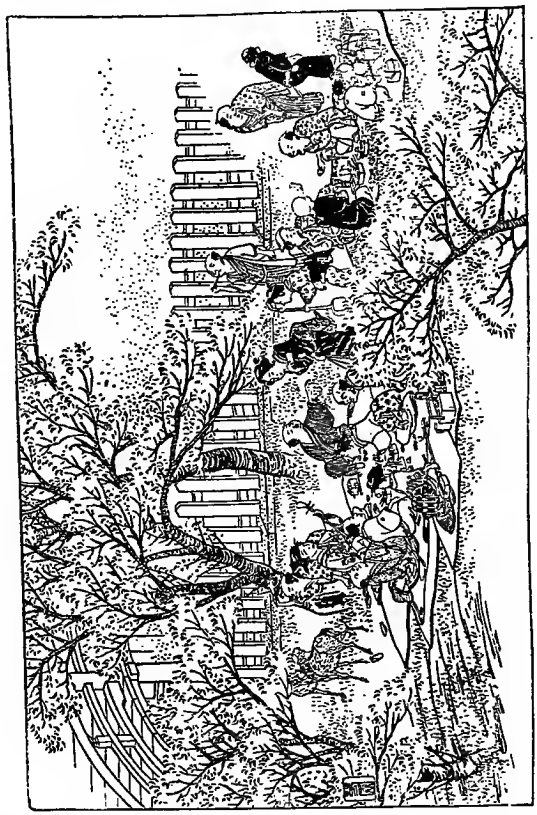


No. 53.—Ko-ro. Seventeenth Century. (W. J. Stuart Collection.)

with the rest of the females, and holds a position little higher than that of an upper servant.

No notice of the contents of a Japanese house would be complete without some reference to the incense-burners (*ko-ro*)

which find a place there, and also in the Buddhist temples. These afforded employment for a large number of artists in bronze. We give an example of a fine ko-ro belonging to Mr. W. J. Stuart, the bodies of the cranes being used for the



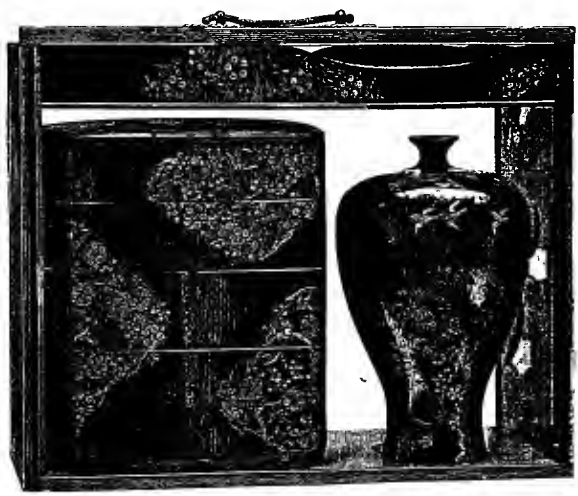
No. 54.—Picnicing.

incense, which issues from perforations in a lid placed in the back.

An article which finds a place in most houses and in all shops and is constantly depicted in Art, is the soroban, a frame enclosing rows of balls moving on wires by which accounts and

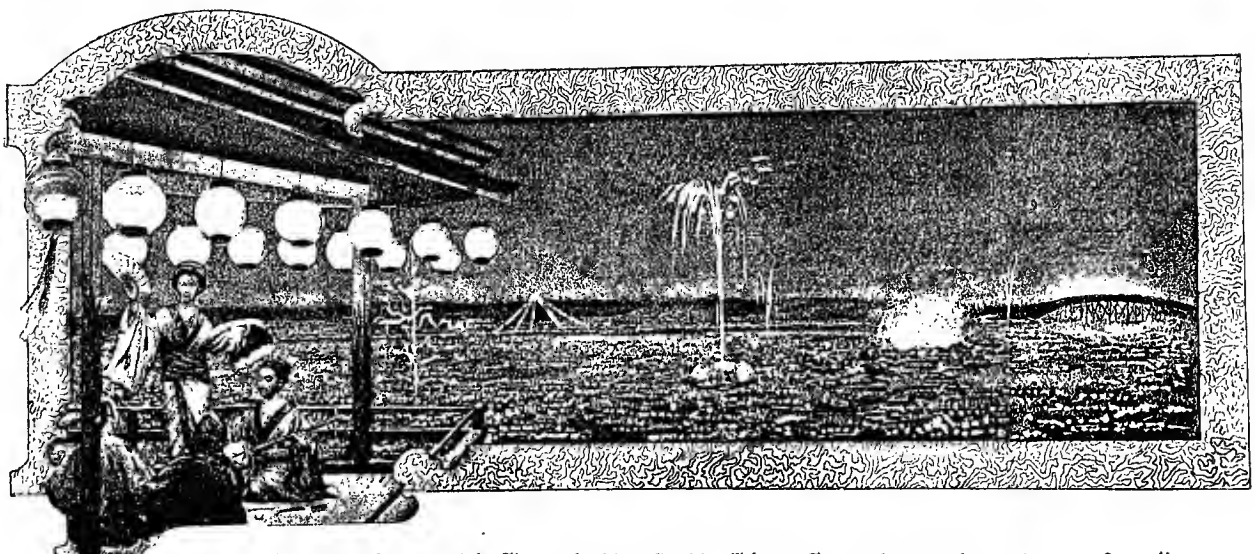
calculations are made. Another article which is constantly being drawn is a besom, which must typify industry. In this respect the Jap is singularly clean, as every evening there is a simultaneous and universal sweeping up of the fronts of the houses. Hokusai is very fond of drawing persons sweeping, especially falling leaves. The old couple, Giotomba (see page 80), always have a broom and rake.

Picnicing is one of the favourite and the mildest of the out-door amusements. It is indulged in by all classes and at



No. 55.—Bento-bako. Eighteenth Century. (*Alexander Collection.*)

all seasons of the year. At stated times the roads leading from the large towns are thronged with animated and joyous crowds proceeding to some favourite haunt. In the Illustration (No. 54) will be found a picture of a party who have apparently made the peach blossoming an excuse for a picnic. At such an outing each used to vie with the other in the beauty of the workmanship and art which had been expended upon his picnic set, or his saké jar. Doctor Dresser mentions a bento-bako or box which he saw in Japan, and which was priced at



No. 56.—A Summer-night Fête on the River Sumida, Tokyo. From "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan."

one hundred and fifty guineas, and there are several in this country which have a value exceeding that amount. Mr. Wm. C. Alexander's, of which an illustration is given, is by Shiomi Masanori, a renowned maker of the eighteenth century, and certainly approaches the value I have just named. One can hardly credit it, but Doctor Dresser asserts that these precious things are carried by the owner on a hedge stake slung over his shoulder. This is hardly reconcilable with the custom of encasing them in silken handkerchiefs and wadded boxes. To such entertainments mats for sitting on, low screens for flirting* behind, tobako-bons, and other objects were also carried. The ladies brought their musical instruments, and songs were sung and poetry improvised.

The excuses for picnicing are many and various. For instance: upon a certain day in January all the world sallies forth to gather seven different kinds of grasses, which, upon the return home, are made into a salad.

The Jap, too, is very fond of spending his time at the tea-house, a sort of restaurant of which there is one or more in every town. They are situated whenever practicable on the most picturesque spots, and many with their gardens, etc., are famed for their views, notably those in the neighbourhood of Lake Biwa. These find a place over and over again in illustrations. The Geishas are an invariable accompaniment of the saké which is consumed and which they serve. They dance, sing, play the koto and samisen, and are not remarkable for "excessive prudery." In the Illustration No. 56 two may be seen.

Every one is fond of pets, whether in the shape of birds, dogs, cats, ducks, or even chickens.

* Flirtation is practised by a wave of the right hand palm downwards, or by waving the right sleeve. Kissing is unknown, as is shaking hands.



No. 56A.—Ono-no-komachi.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS.



No. 57.—Gō-shisho holding up the Brazier.

THE folk-lore, or legendary tales, which afford such never-ending subjects for the Japanese artist, are to many the most interesting of the fields which await exploration by the Western student. The novelty of the majority of the legends, the similitude of a few to those of other races, the conglomerated whole of which each forms an atom, all add a zest which is increased by the inability to gather anything from the undecipherable explanation which lies ready to hand on the face of every illustration of them.

Japan forms no exception to the rule as to the popularity of story-telling. Children imbibe with their mother's milk the legends woven into their nation's history, and round the hibachi or fire brazier, old and young gather, as around our Western hearths, to hear the oft-told stories of heroism and filial piety which form a necessary part of everybody's education.

As with everything else, a large portion of Japanese folk-lore is of Chinese origin: for instance, that connected with philosophers, sages, and filial piety. Fairy tales, on the other hand, are usually the product of the country.

The subject divides itself into the following headings :— Legends concerning philosophers and sages ; those having their origin in history ; those dealing with demons and genii ; feats of strength, and skill in the use of weapons ; fairy stories ; stories of filial piety.

Amongst the philosophers who figure most frequently may be mentioned Confucius, Buddha, and Lao-Tsze (or Rō-shi), discussing the symbols of the Yang and Yin (see Mayer's "Ch. Reader's Manual," page 293) ; the same three tasting saké, and by their grimaces showing how differently it affects them ; one thinking it sweet, another sour, and a third very bitter. According to some this would teach that great minds can afford



No. 58.—The three Philosophers. From a Pouch Ornament. (Author's Collection.)

to differ about trifles ; according to Anderson, "that the same religious principle, passing through the minds of different apostles, may become translated in various ways, according to the idiosyncrasies of its promulgators."

Rō-shi, who was the originator of the Taoist philosophy, is often seen riding on an ox ; he is bald-headed, large-eared, and long-bearded. Saigiyō Hoshi (teacher of the law) is also often represented as an old priest riding a bullock. He is usually in ecstasies at the sight of Mount Fuji ; a figure of him will be found in the chapter on Lacquer. Kio-yo (Hü-Yeo) and his friend Sōfu (Ch'ao Fu) were philosophic hermits. One or other of them is depicted more than once on my metal-work, washing from his ear the taint of worldly ambition which had

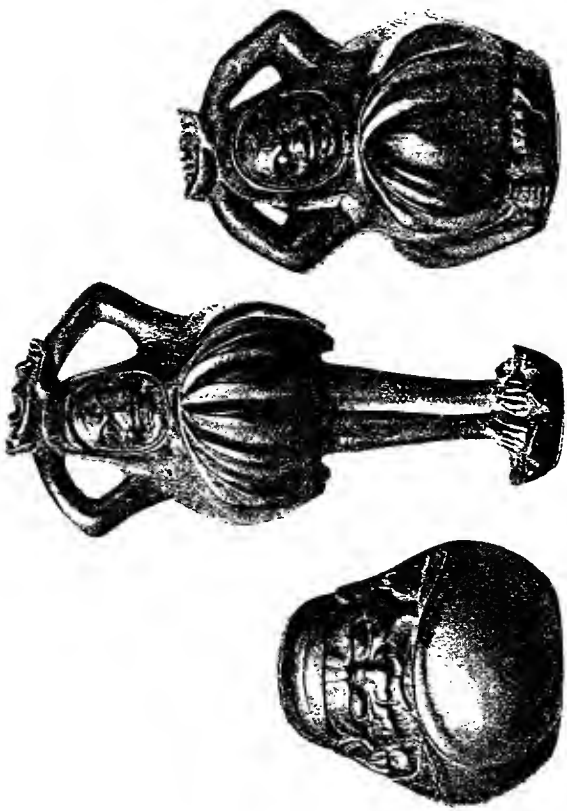
been conveyed to him in an offer by his emperor of a high post at court. The seven sages who met in a bamboo grove, and held to a doctrine "that human happiness consisted in emancipation from cares and worries and unrestrained indulgence in wine" (Thornton's "History of China"), are frequently found on ceramics. Another sage, Sō-sha (Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," page 241), is often painted; he may be recognised by his hat of enormous width, and his riding on a mule through a snow-clad landscape. One of great renown, Kio-shiga or Taikōbo (Kiang-Tsze-yo), is to be seen fishing in order to rid himself of the wrangling of a discontented wife, and to be able undisturbed to muse upon "astronomy, geography, and the art of warfare!" He fished with a straight pin and no bait. It is also said that the fish thought so highly of him that they managed to hold on to this and be caught, and that he looked so wise over this pursuit that the emperor accosted him one day and requested him to become his prime minister.

In the Illustration No. 59 will be seen the Buddhist Daruma, who, arriving in China in the sixth century, at once went into a state of abstraction, which extended over nine years, during which time he never moved; as a result he lost the use of his legs. The netsuké makers are very fond of treating him in all sorts of attitudes, usually without legs, scowling from a bag; the representations here given show him rending his garments and recovering his legs.

Other personages of Chinese origin are Kan-shin, often seen on netsukés, showing an example of moral courage in crawling between the legs of a low fellow who had insulted him, rather than have a disturbance; Yo-jo (Ch. Yu Jang), who is depicted stabbing his sword into the garment of the man who had murdered his king, and whom he had sworn to kill. This he had failed more than once to do, owing to his foe's generosity, so he implored the latter to throw him his mantle, and he satisfied his conscience by stabbing it first, and then committing suicide.

The frequently depicted scene of a man handing another a shoe is Chorio (Chang Liang), a counsellor of the founder of the Han dynasty. In early life he encountered a poor and

aged man, Kōsékiko, who had lost his sandal; this he promptly restored and in return received a volume, from which he derived all the wisdom which distinguished his counsels (Mayers, p. 8). Upon kodzukas he is often seen in a river,



No. 59.—Daruma in contemplation, and Daruma stretching himself. From Netsukés. (Author's Collection.)

seated upon a dragon, which he had conquered, handing the shoe to Kōsékiko, who is on horseback on a bridge.

Foremost amongst Japanese legends are those connected with the country's martial glory. Amongst figures which

stand out most prominently is that of Také-no-uchi-no-sukuné, who lived at least three decades for every syllable in his name, and served under six emperors. We spoke of him in our second chapter, page 25.

A warrior equally ancient but of more ferocious mien than Také-no-uchi is the Chinese god of war, Kwan-yu, who lived in the second century, but is still a very popular personage in both the empires. He wears Chinese garments and a black beard which reaches to his waist, and which he is usually engaged in stroking. He carries a formidable spear, and is accompanied by a repulsive-looking attendant. A frequent subject, especially on sword furniture, is believed by Mr. Gilbertson to be connected with Kwan-yu; it represents a warrior, seated, with a retainer behind him, and another approaching with reverential mien. This must not be confounded with Kwan-yu receiving the envoy (in civil costume), who comes to try and gain him over from his allegiance to his emperor.

An early legend also is that of Yamato Daké (Illustration No. 60), surrounded by the flaming grass which his enemies had set fire to whilst he was out hunting, and saving himself by the wonderful mowing qualities of his Murakumo blade, which is said to have been the identical one which Susano (see p. 23) got from the dragon's tail.

We have already alluded (p. 26) to the great hero Yoshitsuné and his henchman Benkei; a volume could be filled with the episodes in their lives which find a place in Art. Besides those already mentioned, and illustrations in the second chapter, there are many varieties of the battles of Yashima and Fujikawa. It was at the former that Yoshitsuné rode into the water to secure a broken bow which a party of the enemy were endeavouring to grapple with boat-hooks; it was at the latter that he ordered the bridge to be dismantled, and the soldiers to swim across, when the episode of Kagésuyé and Taka-tsuna occurred. Both these warriors were eager to have the credit of being over first. Taka-tsuna, who was on the slowest horse, was soon left behind, whereupon he called out "Kagésuyé, your horse's girth is loose." Kagésuyé

stopped, Taka-tsuna passed him, and reached the opposite bank first, both riding unharmed through a shower of arrows. Yoshitsuné's headlong ride down a mountain side, so precipitous that only deer and wild boar could descend it, is also



No. 60.—Yamato Daké putting out the Flames.

sometimes portrayed. So too is Sasaki crossing the river at the battle of Ojikawa in the midst of a shower of arrows, which he wards off with his sword. He is recognisable by his crest of four hollow squares arranged in the form of a lozenge. Benkei's feats include his stealing the bell of Mi-i-dera, his

writing on the plum-tree at Amagasaki to save it from damage, and his death amidst a shower of arrows. Kusunoki Masashigé (p. 29) dictating his will before killing himself is another common subject. Nitta (see p. 29) killing the wild boar is often found, especially on netsukés, where he seizes it by the tail, or jumps on its back.

A prettier legend than any of these is that of Ōta Dokuan and the peasant girl. The doughty warrior, overtaken by the rain, begged of the latter the loan of a grass rain-coat (*mino*). Without replying she ran off to the garden, plucked a camellia, handed it to Ōta, and ran away. Ōta went off in a huff, only to find out afterwards that this was a polite way of saying she had no coat; for had not a poet centuries before written of this flower, "Although the mountain camellia has seven petals, yet I grieve to say it has no seed (*mino*)." Griffis tells the story, which he says is still preserved in poetry, song, Art, and local lore, in his "Mikado's Empire," page 265.

The story of Ono-no-komachi (Illustration No. 56A) has been a favourite one with artists of every description for centuries. A wondrous beauty, one of the six greatest poets, the idol of the court, a miserable hag, her corpse the prey of dogs—in these successive epochs of her life the painter and the sculptor have frequently portrayed her. We see her showing the magic of her poetry by drawing down rain in a period of drought by her recitations, washing a volume of her poems in the river, to prove by their erasure by the water that certain lines recently inscribed by a rival were not hers, or, especially by netsuké-makers, old, decrepid, and a beggar. Another court beauty who sank to indigence was Seishō-nagon. Quickness in grasping a quotation was highly esteemed in olden days, and this fair lady is usually shown in the act of raising a blind and showing the winter landscape, thus displaying her aptness at recognising an illusion. Another of the poetesses, Murasaki Shikibu, receives frequent notice at the hands of the artists, as she sits in the moonlight in the temple of Ishi-yama-dera overlooking Lake Biwa, and composes the great romance of the Genji Monogatari (see *post* p. 110).

The story of the "oil thief," as he is sometimes called, is an

amusing one. Takamuchi (eighth century) was once accompanying the Mikado on a nocturnal escapade, when in one of the streets of Kyōto they met what in the rain they mistook for a demon, with flames of fire emerging from his head. The emperor retreated in haste, but the valiant Takamuchi went for the demon and threw him. According to some the



No. 61.—*Capture of the Oil Thief. From a Sword-Guard.* (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

demon was only an oil thief on his way to steal oil from the lamps; according to others it was an old bonze, or priest, on his round of lighting the lamps. Whichever it was, the artist always arrays him in the peasant's grass coat and straw hat, through which the rays of light show through (see Illustration No. 61).

I have not been able to ascertain for certain the meaning of a frequent subject here illustrated (No. 62). The noble playing the flute is said to be Ono-no-taka-mura; this was the name of a painter of note in the ninth century. According to one authority, the assassin who is seen creeping up behind him was so captivated by his playing that he repented of his errand; according to another, the noble was quite aware of his danger, and went on playing until the assassin was close behind him, when drawing his sword he despatched him with a wonderful



No. 62.—Ono-no-taka-mura and the Assassin.

back cut. He is sometimes called Yorimitsu. Flute-playing was much indulged in by the fashionables, and fine-toned flutes became celebrated and of great value. A wonderful old flute with a beautiful lacquer case, by Shun-sho, is in the possession of Mr. F. Y. Edwards, of Hampstead.

Ono-no-tofu and the toad play in Japanese Art the part of Robert Bruce and the spider, as he learns the lesson of perseverance by watching the creature seven times attempt to jump to the willow bough, and at last succeed.

Erado, the unfortunate penitent who for one-and-twenty

days stood under an icy torrent,* is often portrayed by metal-workers who wish to show their skill, but the result is usually neither agreeable or satisfactory from an Art point of view, owing to their piling up the agony and the details. Fudo, the god of the lower world, or his messenger bearing the wand of pardon, is a usual accessory. Fudo, "the immovable one," who is identical with Dainichi Morai, the god of wisdom, has usually as accompaniments a sword, representing intelligence, flames typical of wisdom, and a rope to bind evil-doers. Although a popular Buddhist deity in Japan, little is known of him in China.



No. 63.—Erado under the Waterfall.

There are many legends in which demons and genii† take a prominent part. Principal amongst these must be reckoned

* There is a monk An-chin, or Kengaku, who cools his passion for Kiyo-himé (see p. 56) under the waterfall of Nachi.

† The queen of the genii, Sei-ō-bō, is usually depicted as a Chinese princess, with two female attendants carrying a fan, and the peaches of longevity. According to Anderson, the assemblage of the Rishis at her mountain home in Central Asia is one of the common Art motives of the old Chinese and Japanese artists. She must not be mistaken for the dragon queen, who is usually represented clothed in robes of shells and coral.

the stories of Yorimitsu (or Raiko), and the Shiuten Doji and Watanabé and the demon spider. These are too long to tell here, but they may be studied in a remarkably graphic series of drawings in the British Museum (Nos. 285 and 303—416); and Mr. Anderson devotes a considerable space to them in his catalogue. The latter legend also finds a place upon sword furniture, and is easily recognisable. So too does the encounter of Watanabé with the Oni: first the Oni's seizure of him by the helmet; next the Oni's discomfiture and loss of his arm, which is borne away triumphantly by Watanabé; but I have never seen the warrior beguiled by the old woman and losing his trophy.

Amongst feats of strength will be found those of Asaina Saburō in his combats with Matano-no-Gorō and Soga-no-Gorō. He may be seen wrestling, warding off rocks thrown down upon him, struggling with sharks, etc. So too Gō-shisho (Wu Yün), a Chinese general, who showed his strength and learning in a competition by composing and writing a stanza whilst holding up a metal brazier one thousand pounds in weight (see Illustration No. 57). One of the most striking modern pictures in the British Museum collection is Hokusai's Tamétomo holding his bow against the united efforts of four demons, during his visit to their island home, Onigashima. Then there is Kia-taro, or Kintoki, the boys' idol, the child of the forest, who is usually depicted on their kites wielding an enormous axe, or wrestling with the tengus or a wild boar.

There are also many instances of skill in the use of weapons, particularly the bow. Amongst these may be cited the oft-illustrated tale of the death of the nuyé (which had the head of a monkey, the back of a badger, the feet of a tiger, and the tail of a snake) at the hands of Minamoto-no-Yorimasa and his follower, Ii-no-Hayata, illustrated in Mr. Anderson's Catalogue, p. 389. So too Hidésato killing the giant centipede which infested Lake Biwa with an arrow from his bow, which required five men to pull it, is the subject of an oft-illustrated fairy tale.

Urashima may be termed the Japanese Rip Van Winkle. He, in following his calling as a fisherman, caught a tortoise,

which, as we know, lives to a great age. He had compassion on the animal and spared its life, whereupon it was transformed into a beautiful princess, in whose boat and company he rowed away to the "Air Castle" (see Illustration No. 1). After a space of three years, as he supposed, he prevailed upon the princess to allow him to return home. She gave him on leaving a casket, which he was not to open if he wished to see her again. On his arrival at his birthplace he found that the last of his family had been dead many hundreds of years. He was then tempted to open the casket, whereupon he suddenly changed into a wrinkled old man, and his spirit passed into a crane. In this form he rejoined the tortoise, and lived happily for ten thousand years. A ballad on the subject is to be found in "Manyefushifu," dated A.D. 760.



No. 64.—Urashima. From an Ivory Okimono. (Tomkinson Collection.)

The badger emerging from the tea-kettle is a very favourite subject of the netsuké and pouch-ornament maker. The kettle belonged to a priest, and one day on its being put on the fire

sprouted out with a badger's head, legs, and tail. The priest did not like this, and sold the kettle to a tinker, who made such a fortune out of exhibiting it, that at last he retired, and presented it to the temple whence it came, where it received saintly honours.

The tongue-cut sparrow has of late years been a very popular subject, even on such inappropriate objects as sword guards. The legend, which is to be found in Mitford, is of a woman who, annoyed by the sparrows whilst washing, catches one and cuts out its tongue. Her husband, with whom it was a favourite, goes to the forest to find it, is there hospitably entertained by the sparrow family, and on leaving is offered



No. 65.—The Badger in the Tea-kettle. From a Netsuke. (Gilbertson Collection.)

his choice of two baskets, one much larger than the other being old and infirm, he selects the lesser one. Upon his return home he opens it, to find it full of gems. He is upbraided by his better half for his selection, and she goes off and obtains the larger one. Upon opening it goblins emerge from it, even the cords which bind it are transformed into vipers, and these together soon make an end of her.

Momotarō, or Little Peachling, is also very popular. Many netsukés display the peach opening and the baby issuing from the kernel. His journey to the ogres' island, accompanied by the ape, the pheasant, and the dog, and his capture of the castle and treasures, is found upon pouch ornaments, etc. The

old woodcutter who adopted Momotarō must not be confounded with the amiable old Chinaman, T'ung Fang-so, or Tōbōsaku, who ate three peaches, and lived in consequence to the age of nine thousand years. He is usually well dressed, and carries one or more of the peaches in his hand.

A man dreaming that he sees an imperial procession coming to court, offers a test of skill which the Japanese are not slow to avail themselves of. I have a most successful rendering,



No. 66.—The Tongue-cut Sparrow. From a Sword-Guard. (Author's Collection.)

not an inch square, in metal-work. The dreamer is Rosei, who has for a thousand years been typical of the vanity of human greatness. He passed in a dream from poverty to wealth, from insignificance to greatness, through a lifetime replete with events, in the space occupied by the preparation of his supper. The subject is frequently caricatured.

There are some hundred stories of filial piety of Chinese origin, and a quantity which are distinctly of native growth.

Twenty-four, however, is the number of the paragons which the Japanese affect. Mr. Anderson gives a diagram of these in his Museum Catalogue, taken from Arkusai. Those most frequently met with are Mō-sō, whose act was illustrated in our first chapter; Yōko, who clung to a tiger which had sprung at her father, and saved him; Gomō, who would not drive away the mosquitoes which stung him, lest they should settle on his parents; and Shiba-on-ko (Sze-ma Kwang), having the sense, notwithstanding its value, to break the saké jar into which one of his playmates had fallen (Mayers, 199).

There is little room left to describe the anthropological and



No. 67.—The Birth of Little Peachling. From a Netsuké.
(Author's Collection.)

zoological myths, which add nothing to Art except repulsive ugliness. They too hail from China, and Mr. Anderson considers that the Japanese have added to them all that is interesting and amusing. Those oftenest met with are Long Arms and Long Legs helping one another to fish, Whirling Neck craning his head over and round his fellows, and the vampire women, whose lower extremities die away into mist.

For further detail the reader is referred to Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," Griffis's "Fairy Stories," and Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan."

CHAPTER IX.

FLORA AND FLOWER FESTIVALS

"When winter turns to spring,
Birds that were songless make their songs resound,
Flow'rs that were flow'rless cover all the ground;
Yet 'tis no perfect thing:—
I cannot walk, so tangled is each hill;
So thick the herbs, I cannot pluck my fill.
But in the autumn tide
I cull the scarlet leaves and love them dear,
And let the green leaves stay, with many a tear,
All on the fair hill-side:—
No time so sweet as that. Away! away!
Autumn's the time I fain would keep alway."

OGIHIMI, *Seventh Century.*

IF there is one characteristic which marks taste and refinement in a nation it is a love for nature and the beauties which adorn it. In European nations this culture has advanced *pari passu* with civilisation, but only within the last century has it really permeated downwards so as to infiltrate through all classes. But now, if one touch of the love of nature makes the whole world kin, then indeed must we join hands with Eastern nations.

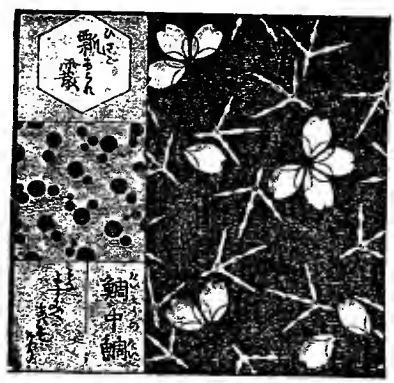
The poets and painters of China and Japan enjoyed nature long before ours thought of it, as the lines at the head of this chapter show. Here, too, is a translation from a very ancient poem:

"Should the mountain cherry cease,
In the spring-time of the year,

With its mass of new-born bloom
Us poor mortal men to cheer,
Then would heart of spring be doomed
And its brightness fade away."

In the British Museum may be seen pictures dating from the eleventh century in which the herbage and rock are drawn so correctly that their species and kind can be identified.

In the "Genji Monogatari," a romance written in the tenth century * (to which we have already referred p. 100), we find the hero, the Prince Genji, frequently exclaiming at the landscape. For instance, as his gaze over the trees fell on the

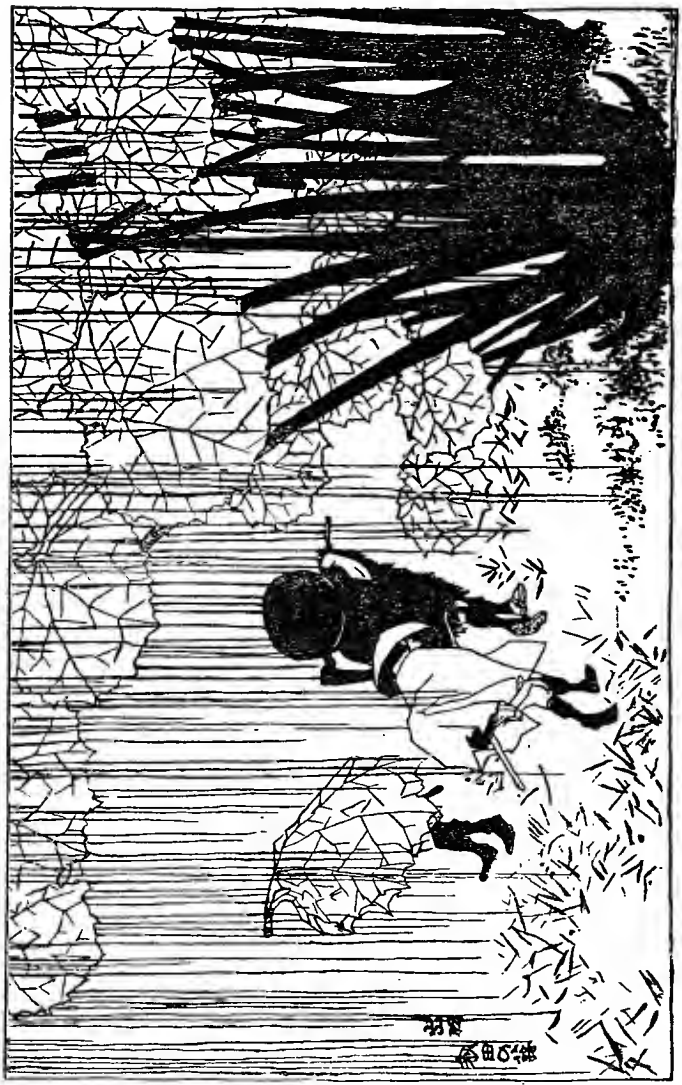


No. 68.—*Design, Cherry Flower and Birds' Feet. From Dresser's "Japan."*

far-off capital, enveloped in haze as dusk set in, "What a lovely landscape!" said he. "The people to whom such scenery is familiar are perhaps happy and contented." "Nay," replied the attendants; "but were you to see the beautiful mountain ranges, and the sea-coast, the picture would indeed be found lovely." During his exile "he sketched every beautiful landscape in the neighbourhood."

Although the Japanese originally received his education in landscape Art and his love for the picturesque in nature from

* Translated by Suyetnatz Kenchis (Trubner).



No. 69.—Tropical Vegetation and Rain. From "L'Art Japonais."

the Chinese, and these were fostered by the teachings of the Buddhist religion, they have undoubtedly been for ages innate in the nation.

The Chinese influence has in reality been a restraining element, which compelled the Japanese artist to look at nature in a false way and depict its forms in a manner entirely inconsistent with its aspect as presented to him. Nay more, fashion and the rules of the school in which he worked compelled him for centuries to turn his back on nature and create a world of frowning rocks and Chinese pagodas which was entirely unlike anything Japanese. These, until within the last hundred years, prevented his taking up a flower, a bamboo shoot, or a bird, and copying it; he was obliged to draw it in a certain manner laid down for him in ages long past, and embodied in manuals whose authority he dare not question. Those who watched the very second-rate artists in the London Japanese village may remember the manner in which they drew—a manner which was identical with that of the whole school. Their paper was divided up into squares which they had to fill in regular rotation, and their design was elaborated either out of a copybook, or, if they had learnt their lesson, out of their head.

It must never be forgotten that the educated and highly-trained Japanese esteems a fine specimen of caligraphy far more than a good painting. A single word written by a noted caligraphist will exceed in value a painting by an artist of equal fame. It is on this account that in metal-work, and in lacquer, and in porcelain we find so many imitations of brush-work. In looking through a collection of metal-work an intelligent Japanese always prefers incised to relief work, and very often the signature at the back to the work on the front. It is quite curious to notice his enthusiasm over a finely engraved signature. Hence one can understand that in a large proportion of cases fidelity to nature would be of small account as compared with technical skill in handling. We see an instance of this in the criticism of Shu-zan (translated "Pictorial Arts of Japan," p. 186), who wrote in 1777, shortly after a section of the artists had begun to look at nature:

"Amongst pictures is a kind called naturalistic, in which it is considered proper that flowers, grasses, fishes, insects, etc., should bear exact resemblance to nature. This is a special style and must not be depreciated, but as its object is merely to show the form, neglecting the rules of Art, it is commonplace and without taste. In ancient pictures the study of the art of outline and of the laws of taste were respected without attention to close imitation to form." On the other hand, in the "Genji Monogatari" there is a long and enthusiastic eulogy upon pictures which are taken direct from nature.

But if the artist is not allowed to study nature as much as he might, that pursuit is undertaken by a large section of the nation. Prominent amongst these are the botanists and herbalists, who for centuries have been noted for their knowledge of the floral and vegetable kingdom, and who enjoy, in common with the Chinese, the distinction of having the most elaborate and oldest vegetable nomenclature in the world. This is hardly to be wondered at, for their country is the most interesting one in that respect outside the tropics.

Captious critics insist that even now the Japanese does not draw his trees and flowers accurately. Even one so generous as Mr. Anderson considers that their representation is distinguished by graceful composition and harmonious colouring rather than by botanical correctness. To the ordinary admirer of Japanese Art this will indeed come as a surprise; he, like myself, will probably rest quite satisfied with the repast which has been spread before him, and will refuse to let his enjoyment be lessened because each petal does not always conform in drawing to accurately defined rules of perspective or is not relieved from its fellow owing to an absence of chiaroscuro.

Flowers are associated with every act of a Japanese's life: they herald his birth, they are his daily companions, they accompany him to the grave; and after that they serve as a link between him and those he has left, for his relatives and friends do not rest satisfied with piling up his coffin with floral tributes, they show their remembrance by offerings for long years afterwards.



No. 70.—Bon-ichi, or Market Day. From Tō-to-sai Ji-ki.

No home, however humble, is complete without its vase of flowers:* in the wealthier ones the vase is of porcelain or metal, in the cottage it is often merely a bamboo shoot. The flower markets are thronged by all classes, and hawkers parade the streets with them. The altars, too, of the temples are almost invariably adorned with flowers.

The arrangement of flowers has its literature and professors, who have laid down regular codes, which extend even to the composition of bouquets, the number of flowers, the proportion of leaf to flowers, and the contrast of colours between the flowers and the receptacle in which they are placed. Mr. Anderson states that four centuries ago the greatest artist of his age did not consider it derogatory to furnish designs for the guidance of ladies in the practice of this offshoot of decorative art. Like many other Japanese customs it is of Chinese origin. Specimens of the bouquets used, from which our florists might gather hints, are to be found in many Japanese handbooks.

The gardens attached to almost every class of house are illustrations of the motto, *multum in parvo*. As a rule, they are not for use, but for ornament, and are laid out with the utmost care and precision. The landscape artist need not travel beyond his garden for much of the material with which he illustrates his work. Dwarfed pine groves, tiny bamboos, a miniature rice-field and meadow, each no bigger than a chess-board, a pebbled stream, a lakelet stocked with carp, gold fish and tortoises, lotus flowers, iris and flowering reeds, even the puny bridge, the waterfall, and tiny mountains a few feet high, are present. A Japanese almost invariably takes all his garden away with him if he changes his dwelling. Rocks are considered a *sine quâ non*, and as an instance of this it may be mentioned that at Tokyō, where no suitable material can be found, they are transported from a distance of fifty miles; there are regular dealers in rocks, and rare shapes and colours cost £20 apiece. Books too are written which treat of the proper positions in the garden which should be assigned to

* "Unlike its population, the country never lets itself be seen naked!" —*Sir R. Alcock.*

them. Professor Morse, in his exhaustive treatise on "Japanese Homes," says that legends are frequently carved upon them, and he quotes one as follows:—"The sight of the plum bloom causes the ink to flow in the writing-room." Stone lanterns (*ishi-dōrō*) are to be found in every garden, and abound in picture-books; larger ones resemble pagodas, the smaller ones mushrooms. They also line the approaches to the temples, to which they have been presented as votive offerings. Every garden which is large enough has a rustic summer-house, over which vines are trained; it is placed, whenever feasible, where a good view can be obtained. Reference has already been made to the fondness of the Japanese for the picturesque in nature; in olden times almost every nobleman's house had its "Chamber of the Inspiring View," whence the best view of the scenery could be obtained, and the rooms, and even the houses, were named after flowers, as the "Kiri," "Wisteria," the "Villa of Falling Flowers,"* and this practice is continued in many modern houses; the banks of Lake Biwa were studded with arbours or booths, and thither poets and authors retired to compose the classics of the country. The porcelain garden seats which are now imported in such numbers were originally designed for use in these arbours.

No notice of Japanese gardens would be complete without some mention of the dwarfed trees, upon which horticultural sorcery has been carried to its extreme limits. Professor Morse mentions seeing a blackened, distorted, and apparently dead stick, which all at once sent out long, delicate, drooping twigs soon to be covered with a wealth of beautiful rosy plum blossoms; also a pine-tree not two feet in height, and with a flattened top twenty feet in circumference. Siebold, in 1826, saw an oak which could be covered with the hand, lime-trees in full bloom, yet not more than three inches high, and bamboos and pines of even smaller size. Then, on the other hand, the gardener prides himself on the enormous dimensions to which he can increase his flowers by careful selection, the

* So, too, the names of women, as the Princess-Blossoming-Brilliantly-Like-the-Flowers-of-the-Trees.

variegation he can effect in their leaves and petals, and the freaks of nature he can bring about. These are the result of long-continued hereditary patience, for this occupation always passes from father to son. Our Illustration No. 71 shows a gentleman (distinguishable by his sword and medicine box) pruning a pine-tree. The Illustration No. 72 is from a volume which treats of nothing but miniature gardens, each of which represents a different view on the Tō-kai-dō Road (see p. 17).

The varied and exceptional climatic conditions of Japan



No. 71.—Pruning the Pine-tree. From Banreiki.

naturally affect its flora very considerably. Consequently we find in the country's Art, often in the same picture, almost incomprehensible incongruities; as, for instance, the palm and the bamboo, side by side with the pine-tree and the oak of northern regions; and the same thing is noticeable in the animal kingdom, as, for instance, the bear and the ape. In no country are the flora more beautiful or more various than in parts of Japan, where in short distances one can pass from almost tropical growths at the sea-level to alpine vegetation round the snow-limits. I noted in my first chapter that Japan

has been described as a veritable country of flowers, and that in hedge, and orchard, and garden they abounded. I may here add Herr Rein's testimony to what it is like beyond



No. 72.—Miniature Garden of one of the Tokaido Hara, or posting places.

the limits of cultivation: "Before reaching the woodland," he says, "lies a sort of prairie; this is usually a living mosaic of flowers and is called by the Japanese 'the great flower

field.' Here may be recognised many an English wild flower oddly associated with many of our garden adornments and numerous complete strangers; for instance, violets, milkwort, pimpernel, blue scabious, bluebells, common bright-eye, bugle, sorrel, hart's tongue, toad flax, osmunda, orchids—mingled with these will be lilies of varied descriptions, with great white, blue, and yellow flowers, the pyrus Japonica, azaleas, deutzias, wild roses, and lilies of the valley."

The forests which cover vast tracts of the mountainous parts of the country are not less remarkable for their wealth of floral beauty, and this not only from the different species of trees but from the growth of climbing plants which cover them and the ground. Any one who will take the trouble to look at the labels which in our Kensington Gardens are attached to most of the flowering trees will see that the majority have been imported from Japan. Rein states that, "early in June nearly a hundred kinds of tree and seventy shrubs may be found in flower on many of the mountain slopes."

Deciduous trees are quite exceptions, and this must be borne in mind when considering representations of winter landscape.

No one who has studied the artist's delineations of Japanese trees but must have noticed his apparent fondness for girdling them with creepers, and how he loves nothing more than to portray their elegant curves and flowing lines; especially is this noticeable in metal-work, where the various coloured metals and pliable wire-work afford scope for their successful rendering. In all this he has only been copying nature as it is presented to him. One especial favourite of his is the hydrangea, which attains to a height of from twenty to thirty feet and in summer is covered with white flowers. The wisteria with its flowers is found on lacquer, ivory, and metal-work; it is as common as our bramble, and the sprays of its flowers often exceed three feet in length, whilst a hundred persons may rest under its shadow and its stem grows to the thickness of a man's body; its branches are used as cables. It typifies youth from its coming in with spring. Its leaves have recently been used with success for making fine paper.

Then there is the fir-tree, which for many reasons is in great request with artists, especially when its trunk is twisted and gnarled. As it typifies long life it is introduced in a multitude of cases. The red and black pine are the commonest of the coniferous trees, and are abundant on the sea-coasts.

The bamboo (*take*), probably from its lending itself so readily to dexterous treatment with the brush, is a prime favourite, and a most picturesque adjunct to the landscape. As the tender shoot with its feathered head, as a tall green, polished, full-grown tree, as the shrivelled frost-bitten reed, it is repeated again and again. Nothing so readily assists the artist to give a hint as to the state of the weather: it droops in the hot air, it flutters with the zephyr, it bends under the breeze, it bows its thousand pennons beneath the typhoon. It is the abiding place of animals, birds, and butterflies, and even the tiger is supposed to hide in its brakes from his enemies. It is associated with the sparrow, because both are of a gentle and timid nature. It typifies uprightness and usefulness, and is emblematical of long life; it attains to an age numbered by hundreds of years.

Then, again, it is a necessity to the Japanese's existence. It is used for everything—houses, hedges, bridges, boats, carriages, conduits, vases, mats, baskets, fans, umbrellas, pipe-cases, tobacco jars; in fact, every article of household use and ornament.

The willow is a favourite with artists and is the subject of many legends: it is found in conjunction with the swallow, owing to both having a wavy and swaying motion.

The pine (*matsu*) is found in great quantities over the whole of Japan; it is not, therefore, to be wondered at that it constantly recurs in its landscape; but it is also introduced on account of its typifying prosperity; in conjunction with the tortoise, crane, and bamboo, longevity; and with snow, ripe old age. Fukusas, on which it is embroidered in company with the crane, are for presentation to the newly-born.

The blossom of the plum (*prunus*, Jap. *umé*) is one of the greatest favourites with the Japanese, for it appears at the close of winter and tells that spring is at hand. Hence poets

sing its praises, and the artist delights in it, for it assures him that sketching time is at hand.

"Ice-flakes are falling fast
Through the chilly air, and now
Yonder trees with snow-bloom laden
Do assume the wild plum's guise,
With their mass of snowy flowers
Gladdening winter's dreary time."

The blossoms appear in March before the leaves (see Illustration No. 73) and are often depicted laden with snow. Umé-také-matsu—the plum blossom, the bamboo, and the pine—fragrant, green, and everlasting, are the emblems of longevity. The plum blossom is often drawn athwart the moon; this is symbolic, but of what I do not know; it is also associated



No. 73.—Prunus Blossom. From a Kodzuka.

with the nightingale. Siebold mentions that it has been cultivated to yield flowers of every shade from white to red, and even yellow and green, and, of course, single and double. Its scent is delicious; the most famous orchards in Japan are at Tsuki-ga-se, in Yamato.

The cherry-tree (*sakura*) has, according to Mr. Anderson, displaced the plum in the affections of the artists of the late school. Nowhere in the world is it seen to such an advantage as in the land where it is principally cultivated for its flowers. Both it and the plum-tree grow wild, and excursions take place (see Illustration No. 76) in the spring to the mountains to see it in its beauty, when, as the old poet sings:

"The dark massed shades are flecked
By the mountain cherry's bloom."

It also grows single and double. In the "Chinshingura" we

read of one Rikiya bringing a basketful of rare eight and ninefold wild cherry blossoms to cheer his lord.

The peach-tree (*momo*) is used in Art much seldomer than either of the foregoing, although it is emblematic of longevity, is a great favourite in China, and grows everywhere in magnificence. One would have imagined, seeing that such endless streams of "hawthorn" china came from the middle kingdom, that this tree was especially favoured by artists. But the truth is that the European does not take the trouble to discriminate between the varieties of flower. So-called "hawthorn" is plum blossom, and the design upon the jars is said to be derived from a pattern made by blossoms fallen upon the ice. For the assistance of my readers I give illustrations of the flowers of the prunus and cherry, by which it will be seen that the petals of the latter are indented at their tops.



No.74.—Cherry Blossom. From a Kodzuka.

The peach-tree is often coupled with oxen. There is a Chinese saying, "Turn the horse loose on the flower-covered mountain, and the ox into the peach orchard."

So, too, the large white blossom of the wild mulberry, and the camellias, as large as ordinary trees, are noticeable; but to give a complete list of the flowers which find a place on Japanese wares would require a volume. One can only touch upon those which oftenest occur, either portrayed in their natural form or conventionalised into ornament; it is some knowledge of this latter department that foreign designers should endeavour to attain to, for at present, in their ignorance, they seize hold of a conventionalised flower, and they alter and adapt it until it loses its individuality, its beauty, and its meaning. There is hardly an English wall-paper or stuff in my own house in which I cannot trace ignorant attempts at improving Japanese floral designs.

The flower of flowers in Japan is the *kiku* or chrysanthemum. Being the imperial crest, it has, of late years especially, found



No. 75.—A Chrysanthemum Show.

its way into the decoration of almost every species of article. This, no doubt, has arisen from the wily Japanese finding that

the foreigner was easily gulled into accepting as a piece from the Mikado's palace any ware which bore his badge. We gave at page 32 an illustration of the conventionalised chrysanthemum.* We now give an instance of a chrysanthemum show, which, it will be seen, differs little from one in our Temple Gardens, save for the folk who visit it. The flower has long been a favourite; in the "Genji Monogatari" we read that "the chrysanthemums in the gardens were in full bloom, whose sweet perfume soothed us with its gentle influence; around us the scarlet leaves of the maple were falling. It was altogether romantic."

The peony (*botan*) perhaps comes next in the floral kingdom to the *prunus* in the frequency of its delineation. The Japanese cultivate it until its flowers attain to an enormous size, and it is easy to understand its attraction to the artist by its gorgeous colour and massive structure. It lends itself admirably to bold designs, whether in the flat or in relief. The double kind is that which is most frequently employed, but it has none of the cabbagey appearance which its relations in this country assume.

The iris (*kosai*) is another popular favourite, and we find it in stuffs, in lacquer, in inlaid ivories, and mother-of-pearl, to which its delicate-coloured flowers lend themselves (see tobako-bon, page 85). The metal-worker too twists its graceful leaves into delightful patterns for his pierced sword guards. The iris, with its brother the lily, is very common throughout the country, growing almost without cultivation.

The tea-plant is one of the most ornamental of Japanese shrubs, as it is allowed to grow to a good size. It is a camellia, and has creamy white scented blossoms.

The lotus flower (*hachisu-bana*) is the Buddhist emblem of purity; for it grows unsullied out of the mud. Upon it the fortunate entrant to Paradise is seated; it therefore forms the resting-place for Buddhas. Its leaves are usually gemmed with dew-drops, and this effect the artist seizes upon at once,

* An illustration was also given of the other Imperial badge, the *Paulownia regalis*. This is similar to our purple foxglove in form, size, and colour. It flowers in April.

whenever he finds it; for their insertion, or that of sparkling rain-drops, will not only afford to whoever looks at his work a clue to the state of the weather when it was done, but its portrayal is a difficulty which he delights in overcoming; this is especially so if he is a metal-worker, for he will then have to drive a tiny hole into his metal, make a minute silver globule, and fix it firmly, for every dew-drop he wishes to represent—

"Oh! Lotus-leaf, I dreamt that the whole earth
Held nought more pure than thee,—held nought more true:
Why, then, when on thee rolls a drop of dew
Pretend that 'tis a gem of priceless worth?"

HENZEN, A.D. 830—856.

Pinks have long been favourites. Wild ones, noticeable for their beauty, grow profusely round Yokohama. A bouquet of the Nadéshiko, or "little darling," is presented by the Genji prince, and in the poetical strain which it was the fashion then and for long after to adopt, he says, speaking of it by another name (Tokomatz, or "everlasting summer"):—

"When with composed gaze we view
The mingled flowers in gay parterre,
Amid the bloom of radiant hue,
The Tokomatz, my love, is there."

Another flower which attracts the Genji's admiration is the Yugao (or evening glory), whose "white blossoms one after another disclose their smiling lips in unconscious beauty." Of these his lady love writes—

"The crystal dew, at evening's hour,
Sleeps on the Yugao's beauteous flower."

The melon is often seen, especially upon metal-work representations of houses, trailing its stem over the sides and roof. It is the emblem of Taikosama. It grows to enormous size, one recently exhibited being 3½ feet long and 5 feet in circumference.

It will be noticed that the fronts and entrances to the Japanese houses are frequently represented as decorated with

flowers, branches of trees, etc. These decorations are set up at various periods of the year upon the occasion of different



*No. 76.—Hanami, or Cherry-Viewing.**

* The Japanese are especially fond of any flower which they have to look up to.

festivals. Of these the principal is that on New Year's Day. They then consist of the bending bamboo and the stubborn fir, representing long and vigorous life, and the red and black stemmed pine, typical of man and womanhood and of a felicitous union. A rope of straw suspended between them stops the entry of evilly disposed persons or demons; so does a piece of charcoal hung from it. Other ornamentations of this rope are a boiled grasshopper crab, typifying old age; yudzurika boughs, upon which new leaves sprout before the old ones fall, indicative of successive generations of children; the red berries of the nandina shrub: upon the bamboo are hung small oranges.

But the flower festivals are the prettiest and most peculiarly Japanese. They commence in February with the *prunus*, followed in March with the peach, and in April with that of the wild cherry. At the last named all the roads are crowded with folk proceeding in their holiday attire to certain well-known spots which are famous for their wealth of bloom. Every one is in high spirits, for the winter of discontent is over and the cherry, the sign thereof and the pride of all the flowering trees, is arrayed in all its beauty. This festival lasts for weeks and certain villages have all the aspect of a fair, for the cherry-viewing is an excuse for picnicking, at which it is the correct thing to indulge in cherry-water. In May comes the wisteria festa at Kamédo, where groves of this tree, covered with blossom, surround a small lake. Then the Japanese has more picnicking and, being poetically inclined, covers the wisteria branches with verses written on slips of paper and composed in praise of its beauty. In June and July come the iris, the calamus, the peony, and the lotus; in August and September the hibisci; in October the chrysanthemum and the maple. The year closes with the sasankwa and cha, as it is ushered in with the camellias. Most, if not all these, are honoured with festivals.

Lastly, falling leaves and petals have always exercised a great fascination upon the poetical and artistic mind. We read of the great warrior Hachiman even reining in his charger to watch them. Poets have sung of them for a thousand years.

"Too lightly woven must the garments be—
Garments of mist—that clothe the coming spring:
In bold disorder see them fluttering
Soon as the zephyr breathes above the lea."

YUKIHIRA, A.D. 818—893.

The artist frequently utilises them to fill a vacant corner in his composition. No one, probably, who has not seen the country has any idea of the beauty of the showers of colours which an equinoctial gale would carry over the face of a land so full of blossom as this.

There is a goddess of flowers by name Mokugé-hiraku-ya-himé-no-mikoto. She holds in her right hand a mirror and in her left a tamagushi, a branch of the sakaki tree with strips of paper attached to it, symbolic of the magatama or sacred jade ornaments, which in ancient times formed part of the tamagushi. (See Dickins, "Fugaku Hiyaku, Kei," p. 11.)

A difficulty is often experienced in discriminating between Japanese and Chinese work. A little study of the method of each nation in delineating flowers will prevent mistakes. For instance, in the room in which I am writing are two vases; around the neck of each is a tendril and on the backs a sort of rose-tree in bloom, but both are conventionalised so as to be unrecognisable; this points at once to a Chinese origin. Again, on the body of each of the vases is an elegantly dressed lady receiving a fish from the hands of a boy; the attitudes of the figures, the dresses, and their colours are as nearly alike on each as hand painting can make them: there would have been variations throughout had they been Japanese. The dress the lady wears is open down the front disclosing a petticoat not worn in Japan. The notes in this volume will I hope assist such an analysis.

CHAPTER X.

ZOOLOGY.



No. 77.—A Tanuki. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

THE Japanese artist is certainly not so successful in limning the higher forms of animal life as he is those of the floral kingdom. For one thing, he is obliged very often to draw creatures which are not indigenous to the country, and which he has never seen in the flesh; for instance, his Buddhist deities, owing to their Indian origin, insist on attaching to themselves as attributes the elephant, the lion, and the tiger; these he is often called upon to introduce into pictures out of his imagination, or from a copy contorted out of all resemblance by continuous repetition. Moreover, as he is not proficient at drawing the face of his deity in profile, he has very often to foreshorten their attributes, and the mess in which he then finds himself is terrible; his elephant appears to be modelled on the form of one of those blown-out, elephant-shaped balloons which come to this country from the East; his tiger takes the similitude of a striped cat, whilst his lion is a puppy with hairy appendages placed just where his

fancy pleases. He is more at home as he descends the scale, and he is hardly to be equalled in his portraiture of birds, fishes, and insects.

Japan is less bountifully supplied with beasts, whether wild or tame, than almost any other country. Wild ones are scarce, owing to the small quantity of uncultivated ground. Domestic animals are not plentiful, because the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration prohibits the eating of meat, and vegetables are in common use; so the ground is given up to them and not to pasture. Carnivorous animals are confined to the bear, wolf, racoon, fox, marten, and badger.

It may be well to commence our notes upon animal-drawing by a mention of the twelve members of the Chinese duodenary cycle which have been adopted by the Japanese. The day in these countries is divided into twelve horary periods of two hours, to each of which an animal appertains. They start from 11 P.M. in this order: the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, goat, monkey, cock, dog, pig. Thus the delineation of one of these upon the reverse of a sword-guard will usually afford an indication as to the hour at which the event upon the front is taking place. The months and the years are also called by the names of these animals, and hence they have been termed the signs of the Zodiac. Their origin has been traced to the Tartars, and it is singular that our ram, bull, scorpion, and lion have an affinity to them.

Of the members of this cycle we have already noticed the tiger, dragon, and ox.

The rat is a prime favourite in Japan in spite of its infesting every house until it becomes a positive nuisance; it waits upon Daikoku, the god of wealth, and makes inroads into his rice bales to show that, when acquired, riches must be watched; it is often depicted upon metal-work, criticising a kakemono. Metal-workers are very fond of making their rats piebald, often for the reason that their so doing makes their task harder. Mice are few in comparison with rats.

The hare (*usagi*) figures very frequently in Japanese Art; it is more like a rabbit than a hare. It was once a sacred

animal, and as such worshipped. It lives to a thousand years, and turns white when half that age, though it is not, curiously enough, emblematical of longevity. It has been associated with the full moon for long ages past, partly from a supposed resemblance to an outline marked upon that satellite, and partly because the unselfish hare of Indian legends which threw itself into the fire as food for Buddha, was transferred to the moon.* I am informed by the Rev. S. Coode Hore (who has collected the folk-lore on the subject) that the legend of the hare in the moon has left its mark in every quarter of the globe. When drawn in conjunction with the moon it is almost always sitting, and surrounded by the scouring rush. It is often to be seen pounding in a mortar the elixir of life; this has probably an Indian origin. The Chinese represent the moon by a *rabbit* pounding rice in a mortar. The hare is also drawn gambolling over the waves, whereby it is supposed to impregnate itself.



No. 78.—Hare, or Usagi, pounding a Machi, or Rice Cake.

Although the horse (*uma*) is frequently rendered by the Japanese artist he is seldom, if ever, successful with it, as may be seen by the great Hokusai's portrayal of a rampant steed in the legend of the lady who showed her strength by holding it in with her foot (Illustration No. 79). This is the more remarkable, because many artists spend their whole life in painting nothing else, as pictures of horses form votive offerings at more than one celebrated resort for pilgrims.

So, too, a frequent feat is to draw a horse in eight strokes, or to compress a herd of a hundred scampering within a very

* See Harley's "Moon Lore," pp. 60—68.

small compass. The horse is very often associated with a



No. 70.—Kaburaki's "Mangwa." — the Strong Woman of Kai

flowering prunus; I have come across as many as three or

four such in quite a small collection of sword-guards, but I have not yet learnt the reason for the connection. The hours allocated to him are from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M., and he is the symbol of manhood.

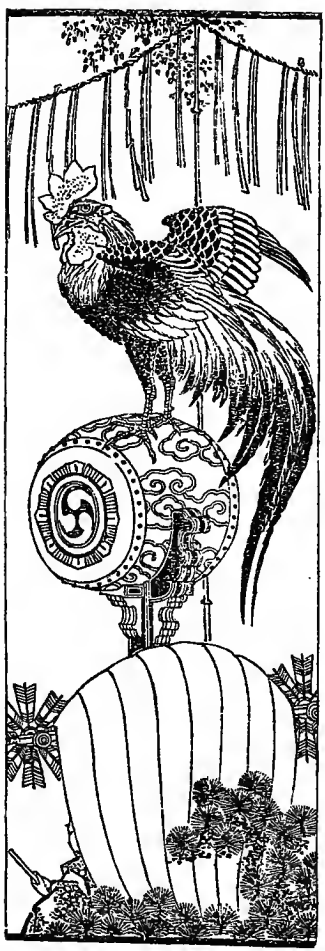
The goat, although one of the cycle, was until recently unknown in Japan, which probably accounts for its being so seldom met with in Art; sheep are also rare, but deer are common, and are kept tame in many of the parks attached to the temples. (See Illustration, page 90.)

Dogs are usually round, fluffy, tailless creatures, of which we have recently seen specimens in this country; there are also pariah dogs, for whom perhaps the proverb was created: "If dogs go about they must expect the stick."

The pig, or rather the boar (*ino-shishi*), is a great favourite with netsuké-makers, who delight in the story of the artist O-kio, who painted so realistically, that a wild boar which he thought to be asleep and drew as he saw it, was declared by a critic to be dead, which it turned out to have been. The artist Tamétaka was especially notable for his boar netsukés. There evidently is some reason which I have not yet ascertained, for the frequent delineation of such an ugly creature upon delicate articles such as inros.

In no particular does the Japanese betray the Chinese origin of his work more than in his draughtsmanship of monkeys (*saru*). He finds the long-armed breed so very attractive and useful, that he is continually introducing it, although it is not indigenous to the country, where the only species is the red-faced ape (*macacus speciosus*), whose tail is short and fur fine and yellowish. The monkey is a great favourite with artists, and many, notably Sosen, have made the portrayal of its downy coat a speciality, in which they have not been excelled by any other nation on the face of the earth. Its playfulness and grotesqueness were sure to attract the sympathies of the humorous Japanese, who has even enlisted it in the service of his (Shintō) religion. Whilst statues are erected in its honour in that *rôle*, it does not escape the degradation of serving the wandering showman, as recent ivory carvings so often bear witness.

Amongst other mammals we must not overlook the bat (*komori*) whose peculiarly formed wings are seized upon very frequently as a motive for ornamentation. The bat also figures frequently on Chinese porcelain, etc., but probably for another reason. Its name *fuhs* has the same sound as *fuh* "happiness."



No. 80.—*Cock on a Drum. From Hokusai's "Ehon Tei-kun Orai."*

The cock (*ondori*) is especially attractive to the Japanese eye by reason of his plumage. His connection with the temple drum has been already noted (p. 22). The ornament at the end of the drum, in Hokusai's Illustration (No. 80), consisting of three balls with tails, which form a circle, after permeating Japan and being the commonest decoration in the empire, has come to be received even into English millinery, for the writer saw it recently at Ascot adorning a wonderful dress of white and gold. Called the *mitsu-tomoyé*, its origin is unknown, but in Buddhism it is held to be significant of the heaping up of myriads of good influences, good luck, longlife, etc. It is the second badge of the once-powerful house of Arima, but, besides this, is found on roof-tiles,

lanterns (at the *matsuri*, or religious illuminations), and on drums at the *Tanabata* festival (see also p. 143.) Fowls are common in Japan, and the Jap's fondness for young ones and pets is evidenced in his frequent drawings of hens with chickens.

No one who has studied the Art of the country will be



No. 81.—*Foxes extinguishing Chochin* (*Lanterns*).

surprised to hear that the fox (*kitsuné*), the badger, and the racoon-faced dog (*tanuki*), are everywhere abundant. All are credited with the power of assuming other forms; the tanuki is often drawn sitting on its haunches, drumming on its stomach apparently to the moon, but in reality in the hope of mislead-

ing travellers by this delicious sound; it also hides amongst the lotuses with the same intent (see Mr. Gilbertson's netsuké, Illustration No. 77), and acts in legend the part of pantaloon to the fox's harlequin. The badger resembles the American more than the European species, its face is doglike, its tail short and bushy. The tanuki metamorphoses itself into inanimate objects, such as articles of furniture.

The fox can at the age of fifty take the form of a woman, at a hundred that of a young and beautiful girl, at a thousand it is admitted to the heavens, becomes the celestrial fox and has nine tails. It has the same character for thieving, mischievousness, and cunning as in Western countries. It is honoured as the messenger of Inari-Sama, god of the harvest and especially of the rice-field. Little temples dedicated to it are often to be seen on hillocks in the rice-fields, figures of seated foxes in stone border the entrance to the pathway leading to them; upon the altars which are raised by the farmers, offerings of rice are placed.

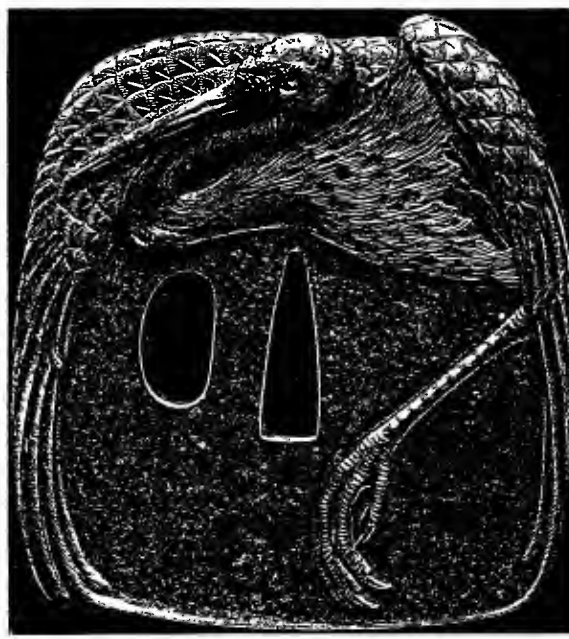
The kitsuné is smaller than our fox, it is found associated with the chrysanthemum, owing to a legend (see Reed's "Japan," vol. ii. p. 103), and perhaps also because it has a fondness for gardens which it frequents, even to those in the large towns. In the Illustration No. 81 it will be found putting out lanterns in order to eat the candles. The inscription to this engraving states that there is an old legend that foxes used to practise this, and that it is still true.

Cats (*neko*—rat-killers) copy their kinsmen in Manxland and dispense with tails. The dogs usually seen in Art are the Chin or lap-dogs which were introduced from Macao in the seventeenth century by the Portuguese.

There are but few other animals which find a place in Art. Squirrels are frequently met with in conjunction with the vine, but they are not numerous in any part of the country.

The king of birds in Japan is undoubtedly the crane (*tsuru*). It is termed by country folk "my great lord." It is one of the representatives of longevity, and is held in great veneration. "One crane's voice is better than the chirping of a thousand sparrows" is a Japanese proverb. The Japanese evidently

delights in the manner in which it lends itself to decoration, by the graceful lines of its body both when flying and at rest, and by its colours, for he drags it into his work on every possible occasion, although the bird is by no means common in Japan. The two kinds which are found there are the white, and the ashen coloured save for a red crown and black tail



No. 82.—*Crane. From a Sword-guard.* (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

feathers and upper neck. The big bronze cranes which we see at so many curio bazaars, degraded by holding an umbrella in their beaks, have been used in gardens in Japan. Fukusas with the crane and pine embroidered on them are presented to new-born babes. Silver herons or egrets (*sagi*) are more common, and are usually to be seen following the labourers amongst the rice ; they share with cranes the common appella-

tion by foreigners of "storks." White animals are sacred and are most esteemed. Hence the proverb, "To talk to the crows of the white heron."

The gorgeous plumage of the peacock naturally attracts the artist in every branch, especially in coloured metals. But as it is only two centuries since it was introduced into Japan, it is only found upon modern Art. It must not be confounded with the Ho, of which I spoke at page 61.

The pheasant, on the other hand, originally came to us from China and Japan. The beautiful plumage, especially of the male bird, is taken advantage of wherever colour is required, notably in embroideries. He usually consorts with the cherry, both being so beautifully arrayed. So, too, the Muscovy duck, which, with its mate, is typical of conjugal felicity, is an oft-repeated subject.

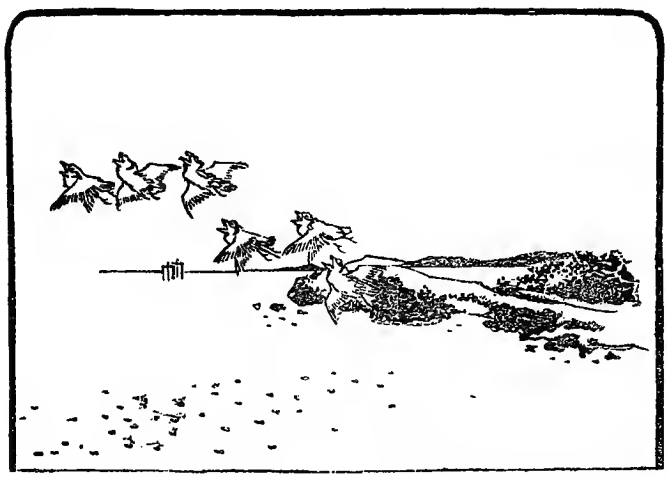
Wild geese have apparently always been an attraction to the artist; their rapid motion and formal flight have both been most useful to him when he wished to import into his work vigorous action. Novelists and poets have been similarly attracted, and many stories of the heroic days are connected with it, notably that of Kiyowara Takénori, who at the battle of Toriumi guessed the whereabouts of his opponent, Atemo Sadato, by the movements of the wild fowl. Geese are associated with rushes, it being believed that in making long flights they carry rushes in their beaks, which they drop on the waters and rest on.

Falconry was a sport which was formerly enjoyed by the upper classes, and many pictures bear witness to this, as do the embroideries, where the bird sits on a perch with a cord round its leg. Falcons (*taka*) and eagles (*washi*) are to be found more frequently on old than new work, but they continue to be objects on which the metal-worker lavishes all his skill. The eagle by Miochin at South Kensington, for which the enormous sum of £1,000 was paid, is an instance of this.

Another bird which is still employed in the service of man is the cormorant, which may often be seen perched on the bows of a boat, whilst the fisherman holds the torch which attracts the fish (see Illustration No. 84).

The soft grey plumage of the pigeon and dove finds favour with the carvers in ivory and mother-of-pearl, and the representation on these materials upon screens leave little to be desired. The dove is curiously enough sacred to Hachiman, and is the messenger of this god of war (see p. 25) and always to be found in the precincts of his temples.

The sparrow is as much at home in Japan as in England, and is not, I believe, an importation, or voted a nuisance, as it is elsewhere. The artist in metal-work delights in introducing its copper-coloured body, and the painter finds it a useful



No. 83.—*Chidori. From the "Yanagawa Gwa-jo."*

adjunct in imparting life and movement to his simple subject of waving grass or bamboo. We referred in our chapter on legends to the story of the tongue-cut sparrow, p. 106; it also figures in other stories.

Flights of small birds will be frequently seen in seascapes scudding over the surf. These are chidori, or "godwits," which fly in flocks, and are very numerous (see Illustration No. 83). The expert, M. Kataoka, calls them "snipe," but

they have not the snipe's long beak. They utter a plaintive cry, which has for long ages affected the poets.

According to Mr. Dickins the most beautiful of all the birds is the sankohō, a flycatcher, of bright cobalt blue and glaucous green colour and with two very long tail feathers, but I have never come across it depicted on works of Art. The jay with its bright plumage and the wood-pecker are used by the lacquerists.

The thrush is common, and a bird very frequently met with is the nightingale; it is olive-green, mingled with grey, its breast being a greyish-white. The bird which is so often depicted flying across the moon is a small cuckoo of nocturnal habits, called Ho-Toh-Toh from its note. The legend of this, which dates from the twelfth century, is set out at length in Reed's "Japan," vol. ii. p. 101. A kingfisher is beautifully portrayed upon a sword-guard in my collection.

Other European birds are the raven, house swallow, red-breast, wren, tomtit, finch, snipe and the quail (very frequently met with and almost always associated with the millet).

The finest work of the great metallists has been lavished upon imitations of lobster and crayfish fac-similed in every joint. One belonging to Mr. E. Gilbertson is so wonderfully flexible, that it feels quite uncanny when laid in the open hand. What an interval separates this production of Miochin's from those of later artificers!

One of the instruments of martial music was a spiral shell of large form, which, being bored at the point, was used as a trumpet. It is often seen in Art, and there is a Japanese proverb apropos of bragging, "He blows the Triton's horn."

I have a sword-guard on which a Jap, partly in fun, but principally from fear, is retreating from an ungainly animal, which I find out to be the giant salamander; it attains to a length of five feet.

The tortoise and the marine turtle (*yasawa*) are the reptiles which find the most frequent delineation in Art; but the latter can hardly be called a denizen of the country, and it furnishes little or no tortoiseshell, which is all imported. The tortoise is kept in confinement, either in the temple tanks, or in the

gardens. The toads, which, in bronze especially, the artist is so fond of modelling, and frogs, are common, and are the same species as ours, but the toad has a large head. The toad is often seen in company with an eccentric individual called Gama Sennin (see page 45). It is supposed to possess a spiritual essence and to be able thus to escape from captivity.

Snakes are common, and attain to a length of five feet; they, too, are favourites with the artists in metal-work.

Every Jap is a fisherman. It is his favourite pursuit, and his patience is worthy of the most devoted disciple of the gentle craft. But, in so far as regards the sea, it is amply rewarded, for it teems with various specimens of the finny tribe; in fact, it is said to be more plenteously furnished than any other water on the face of the globe. The *tai*, or bream, is highly thought of: it is the one associated with Ebisu, the god of daily food (see p. 49). There are also myriads of mackerel, plaice, flounders, herrings, tunny, and enormous bonitos; and in fresh water, trout, carp (*koi*), and eels.



No. 84.—Cormorant Fishing. From Hokusai's "Ehon Tei-kun Orai."

A fish, usually a carp, leaping up a waterfall, is a common

object in Japanese Art; it typifies ambition and perseverance.

There is a curious custom in Japan to send a piece of dried fish with every present. It is supposed to be a memento of the time when the nation were all fishermen, and such humble fare was the rule, and therefore is a suggestion of lowliness. A dried head and shoulders is the commonest representation in Art of this custom.

No one acquainted with Japanese Art will be surprised to learn that vast quantities of insects (*mushi*) find a home in Japan, or that its inhabitants do not dislike them, but rather the contrary. The wealth of beetles and butterflies is enormous; and Rein states that more varieties can be found within a few miles of Tokyō than in the whole of the British Islands. In the autumn especially the air is alive with the chirping of the grasshoppers, etc., and songs a thousand years old testify to the pleasure which the inhabitants derive therefrom.

> "Fain would one weep the whole night long
> As weeps the sudu-mushi's* song,
> Who chants her melancholy lay
> Till night and darkness pass away.'
>
> From the *Genji Monogatari*, A.D. 990.

To Europeans the monotonous chanting of the insects becomes wearisome, but apparently the Japanese differ from us in their musical tastes, for they sometimes even rave about the croaking of the frog.

In a recent facetiously written French work upon Japan, the author harps upon *les cigales*, which "*cela va sans dire, font leur joli bruit sonore*," until one is certainly more distracted with them than the author appears to be.

Butterflies (*cho*) of rare species, as well as many known to us, abound. They are the symbol of womanhood, and ornaments in their similitude are worn in the hair in token thereof.

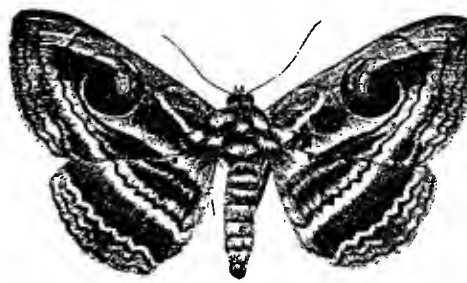
The quantity of stagnant water in the rice-fields favours the propagation of dragon-flies. They are always being met

* The sudu-mushi, or bell-insect, is one of the most sweetly singing of the tribe; its song resembles a tinkling bell.

with in Art, and the empire even is named after them, from its shape bearing some resemblance to that creature.

The praying mantis and the grasshopper are great favourites with artists, the ugly form of the former being even perpetuated in silver models. Grasshoppers and other insects are kept as pets in those delicate little wicker cages which frequently come over to this country.

The writer in looking through a collection of moths and butterflies recently formed in Japan by Mr. J. H. Leech, saw one which may have possibly afforded the idea of the tomoyé ornamentation to which reference has been made at page 134. The butterfly is a common one in Japan, and, as will be seen



No. 84A.

from the Illustration No. 84A, it bears upon its wing a marking which is exactly in the form of one of the three parts which is upon the mitsu-tomoyé. It is curious that this form is apparently seen by the Japanese in wave eddies. We have noted it as such on a box-cover dating from the seventeenth century, probably by Kajikawa I. But the supposed derivations are almost endless; falling snow, waves dashing against a rock, a torno or glove, and the crescent moon upon the sun, have all been suggested. The last named, as representing the male and female principles in nature, has much to recommend it.

The introduction of Murray's "Japan" contains a succinct account of the zoology of the country from the pen of Mr. F. W. Dickins, and Rein's "Japan" will also be found very useful.

CHAPTER XI.

LACQUER.

HAVING surveyed the various influences and motives which have affected or are evidenced in Japanese Art, I now propose to touch upon those of the varied Art industries of Japan which most frequently come under the view of the public in this country.

Foremost amongst the wares for which Japan has become celebrated is lacquer, in the manufacture of which it stands pre-eminent amongst nations. Lacquer has been an industry in Japan beyond the ken of man. Before the Christian era there is said to have been an officer whose business it was to superintend its production at the Mikado's court, and specimens more than a thousand years old are in existence. With such antiquities it is useless here to deal; examples of that age are likely to be seen or acquired by very few, if any, of my readers,* and, therefore, as regards both this and other manufactures, I shall not touch upon any variety of which a specimen may not become accessible to an ordinary collector.

The manufacture of lac will be found described in Gonse's "L'Art Japonais," Audsley's "Arts of Japan," and Mr. Ernest

* It may be taken for granted that the majority of curios are of later dates than those assigned to them. A recent issue of the *Japan Mail* states that: "The curio dealers of Kyōto have decided to open a show-room near the Kitano temple, where no article will be admitted that is less than one thousand years old!" Here is a chance for globe-trotters!

Hart's "Lectures," but the accounts have almost all originated in a parliamentary blue-book by Consul Quin, where it is set out at great length. The following notes are derived from the same source, with the addition of some hitherto unpublished information.

Mr. E. Gilbertson, the possessor of over a thousand pieces of lac, and an indefatigable student of the subject, sends the following note of warning upon the processes as set forth in the text-books :—"I suspect that there are great varieties in the modes of manufacture. Probably, every eminent master had his own peculiar method of producing certain effects. Usually I find a certain order of processes recorded in the text-books, without, apparently, the least suspicion that they apply only to certain classes of articles. I have dissected various specimens of lacquer, with the result of discovering that these descriptions were altogether inapplicable to Inros, and I believe also many other sorts of lacquer. I learned, moreover, that there is a great difference in the treatment of objects of the same class by different makers; in fact, all the descriptions of the art of lacquering can do no more than give a general idea of the processes employed."

Wood is the most usual basis for lacquer articles, and the following notes upon the manufacture will, unless mention is made to the contrary, refer to those made in that manner.

The various pieces of wood of which the article is to be composed are first cut and fitted; these are often no thicker than a sheet of paper. Any interstices there may be in the grain of the wood or the joints are filled with a composition of powdered stone or chopped hemp, which answers to our system of priming. It is needless to add that the wood (which is usually *hinoki* for boxes, and *honoki* (magnolia) for sword-sheaths) has been seasoned and dried. How carefully this is done is evident from the fact that a piece is hardly ever encountered which shows the slightest sign of shrinkage or warping. Boxes made two hundred years ago are as perfect in this respect as the day when they issued from the hands of their producer. I have one in my possession (Illustration No. 92) which is only a fair sample of such work, where a tray in

the interior will rest upon the compressed air, which cannot escape, so perfectly does it fit. I am sorry to say that this



No. 85.—The Priest Saigio, Kamakura Lac. Fifteenth Century.
(Tomkinson Collection.)

fact oftentimes elicits more of my friends' interest than the artistic workmanship which is everywhere evident in the piece. This marvellous construction, for it is nothing else, is

even more strikingly exhibited in the joining of the various compartments of the inro, or medicine cases, where each section fits as if it had been made by the most accurately devised machine.

But to proceed with the details of the construction. After the fittings of the joints have set firmly, all excrescences are ground down with a whetstone, and the whole is covered with a thick coat composed of a mixture of powdered and burnt clay and varnish, which, when dry, is again smoothed down with the stone. This done, the article is in most cases covered with silk, hempen cloth, or paper, which is pasted on with the utmost care, so that neither crease or joint is seen. The texture of the cloth can, however, be distinguished on many even of the finest pieces if held so as to allow the light to reflect from them. The piece then receives from one to five thin coats of the clay and varnish mixture, each being allowed ample time to dry. According to Audsley, the article resembles at this stage a finely-rubbed brick. This surface having been made perfectly smooth by use of the whetstone, the process of lacquering commences, a spatula at first and afterwards a thin flat brush of human hair being used to lay it on. Space will not allow of our going through the numerous differences which attend the laying on, polishing, and drying of the different layers of lac,* until the final coat is reached, which requires to be laid with cotton wool with the utmost delicacy, and is at once almost rubbed off with soft paper; this, when dry, is polished with deer's horn ashes reduced to an impalpable powder and applied with the finger.† Enough has been said to show the unexampled care which has attended

* Lac is not a varnish in the usual acceptation of the word. It is a gum resin formed of the sap of the *Rhus vernicifera* dissolved in a solvent that evaporates. This gum contains about eighty-five per cent. of urushic acid, two and a quarter per cent. of a nitrogenous substance, rather more than three per cent. of a gum soluble in water, like gum arabic, and the rest water. The quantity of urushi (lacquer) produced throughout the empire in 1886 was twenty-five and a half million *me* (100 me = 1 lb troy).

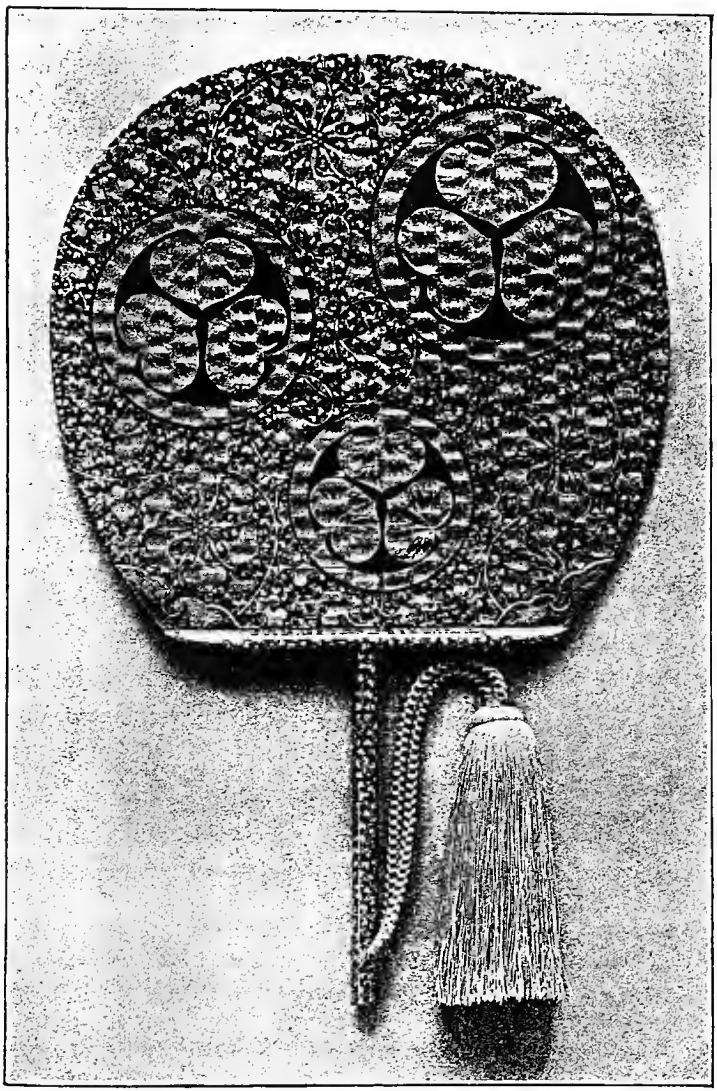
† It is a common error to suppose that the polish on lac is effected by the varnish; it is entirely by the polishing just described

the process and the time which all this takes—the drying alone of a good piece requiring, up to this point, under the most favourable circumstances, 530 hours.

But we have as yet only got as far as the preparation of the black ground. There has still to be added to this the wonderful superstructure of decoration, whether it be in gold, silver, mother-of-pearl, or a variety of metals. The metallic dusts or powders used for this are infinite in variety of composition, size, weight, and shape, are all distinguished by the Japanese workmen by different names, and each is brought into his service in accordance with rules long ago formed for him by the experience of his ancestors. Space will not allow of our going through the various processes. We can only here call attention to those most frequently encountered, and show how they may be distinguished.

The most oft recurring form of lac is that popularly known as avanturine, from its resemblance to the avanturine Venetian glass. Its correct name is nashiji, from its supposed likeness to the spotted rind of a pear (*nashi*). It consists in either mosaicing the ground with particles of gold dust, or in covering it with gold dust until it assumes, as the French say, a crushed barley-sugar appearance. In this latter process great skill is required to attain a perfectly even distribution of the flakes; this is covered with coatings of a fine transparent lacquer, often amounting to a dozen in number. Nashiji dates back to the fifteenth century. It is usually made either of pure gold, gold and silver, or pure silver, but there are seven degrees of fineness in each.

Giobu-nashiji, said to be named after the inventor, who lived in the early part of the eighteenth century, is where small squares of gold leaf, called kirikané (or cut metal), are used instead of the powdered gold; but this practice is found in pieces of much earlier date. In designs where this style of work is finely carried out, it is wonderful to observe the regularity with which each of these squares has been laid, especially when, as is often the case, they diminish in size: a similar method of work is sometimes to be found in minute pieces



No. 85.— *Fan. Daimio Lac. Eighteenth Century.*

of mother-of-pearl. Each piece is applied separately by means of a thin-pointed bamboo stick.

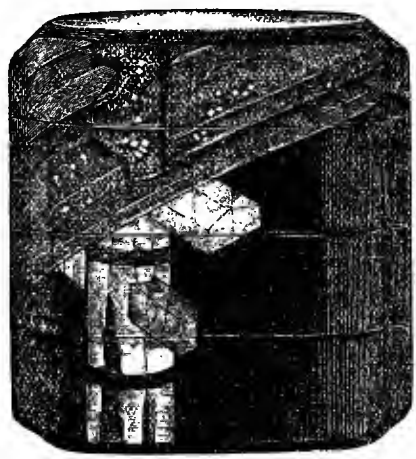
Togi-dashi is where the patterns in metal are the result of grinding and polishing. The design is transferred on to the lacquer by means of a paper upon which the lines are traced with a slow-drying lacquer; this, when in position, is emphasized by a little fine white powder and then gilt, those portions which have to come brightest being raised above those of a lower tone by means of a coating of a thick stiff lacquer and gold dust. When this has dried, all portions of the ground or pattern which yet require gilding are covered with lacquer and then dusted with gold; this, when dry, is again twice lacquered and thoroughly dried. The surface is then rubbed down until the gold design begins to show itself. Great care has to be taken so as to prevent injury to the gold during the numerous coatings and grindings which are necessary until the pattern shows up satisfactorily through the glaze; when this is accomplished it has still to be polished.

The name hira-makiyé is applied to all lacs where the design is not raised above the surface more than the thickness of the lines; as Mr. Audsley says, it includes almost all the pieces notable for beauty, delicacy, and tenderness of feeling and treatment. The details and transparent effects are usually produced by graduated or softened-off dustings of metal. The skill consists in so distributing the powders as to secure the exact proportions and shadings. In fine examples a mistake as to this never occurs.

This process is often combined with taka-makiyé, where the surface is raised or indented. In this, as in the process last described, the ground-work has to be entirely finished before the ornamentation is commenced. Low relief is accomplished by dusting the design in wet lacquer with fine camellia charcoal powder; for high relief *sabi* (a mixture of burnt clay and lac varnish) is used; both when dry undergo various polishings and grindings.

The other sorts of lacquer requiring notice are tsui-shiū (red), and tsui-koku (black), where the design is carved out of a thick coating of lac. But the most remarkable work in this

way is Guri lac, where the body of the work is formed of superimposed layers of various coloured lacs, through which designs, usually consisting of flowing curves, are cut in V-shaped incisions, sometimes to the depth of a quarter of an inch, thus exposing the layers. Fine pieces of this lac are not common, but it is frequently imitated by colouring the sides of the incision so as to resemble the layers. A good magnifying glass will usually enable the imposture to be detected; and here I may remark upon the value of this instrument in the examination of Japanese manufactures, especially metal work. Desirable specimens should always stand its test. Yosei (1650



No. 87.—Inro, by Honnami Koyetsu. (Tomkinson Collection.)

—1670) introduced from China a practice of carving Guri lac into landscapes and figures, utilising the different coloured layers to represent different planes or portions of the picture. Heijiuro (1596—1615) was the great master of Guri lac.

Chinkin-bori dates no farther back than the early part of the last century, when it was copied from the Chinese. It is similar to dry-point etching, and consists in incising the pattern in fine lines into the body of the lac with a graver

or rat's tooth, and filling up the incisions with powdered gold.

Mention must also be made of works in monochrome, where the pattern is in the same colour as the ground; black is a favourite colour and the result is thoroughly artistic. Koma Kuansai excelled in this.

Those who care to see the materials of which lacquer is made, and specimens in various states of manufacture, can do so by paying a visit to Kew, where they will be found in the top floor of the museum. There are sections of the tree from which the lac exudes, the lacs themselves of varied colours, from light grey, green, and yellow, to brown and black;* the hempen cloth, silk, and paper in which the object is cased, the clays and colours used, the stones, brushes, tools, and even the drying press. Then there are several plaques showing the processes of togi-dashi, taka-makiyé, and the manufacture of the nashiji or avanturine ground; in this latter there are bands of four different kinds of avanturine (presumably gold, and silver in two mixtures, and silver), and it is curious to observe how little difference there is between them upon completion, the yellowness of the superimposed lacs having made them all of the same barley-sugar hue. There is also a case showing fifty various methods of lacquering sword-sheaths, but it is placed too high for study. These specimens should properly be in the South Kensington Museum.

Until the opening up of Japan thirty years ago, the only specimens of Japanese lacquer known in Europe were the few pieces which surreptitiously found their way out of the country in the occasional cargoes of wares which the Dutch settlers were allowed to export. How few these were is shown by a search of the records of the eighteenth century, which contain entries to this effect: that eleven ships sailed in one year, carrying 16,580 pieces of porcelain and 12 pieces of lac. The reason for this was that the exportation of lac was forbidden. There were collectors of it even in those times, amongst whom Madame de Pompadour (who expended 110,000 livres

* Jet black arises either from acetate of iron and water having been mixed with the lacquer, or finely powdered charcoal dust, or lampblack.

upon it) and Marie Antoinette were the most notable. The latter's collection, of about one hundred pieces, is in the Louvre, and M. Gonse states that there is hardly a single one which is not of an inferior quality. The most notable pieces



No. 88.—*Suzuribako, by Korin. Eighteenth Century.*
(*Mr. M. Kataoka.*)

of this sort in this country were those included in the Hamilton collection. For these enormous prices were paid at its dispersal.

Fashion, and knowledge still more so, have as in other matters moved forward rapidly of late. It is not much more than a decade ago that collectors would talk about, and have

nothing but, "Daimio" lac. Many of them had but a vague idea of what was included in that term, but they made it all embracing, as they well could do, for there are probably few sorts of lac which were not at one time or another made for the great princes. I have asked many collectors and Japanese experts what they meant by the term, and all have differed. But the majority would seem to confine it to the large pieces of furniture which were made for the Daimio's actual use, and to the smaller pieces ornamented with diaper or flowing patterns of a formal nature, and, usually, the crest of the owner. The fan (Illustration No. 86) has a thoroughly Daimioesque design. The sho-chiku-bai, or pine, bamboo, and prunus, which so often recur, may be said almost to come under the category of a Daimio pattern.

The eldest lac with any approach to artistic quality which comes into the foreign market is that which is known as Kamakura-bori, so called from the city of that name, the capital of the Shoguns. Old specimens of this are not frequent, but not long ago I encountered half-a-dozen examples in a collection sent over from Japan for sale. They consisted for the most part of figures rather rudely carved, covered with a thick coating of red lac over black, which shows through with age. I give a specimen of one of them (Illustration No. 85); it is supposed to be at least four centuries old, and represents the wandering priest Saigio.

Probably the earliest artist in lac whose work is likely to be found by the ordinary collector is Honnami Koyetsu. The date of his birth and death are known (1556—1637), and he was fortunate in passing the last twenty years of his life under the Tokugawa dynasty, who brought in an era of taste and refinement. He was the originator of the schools of Soyetsu and Korin. In the inro before us (Illustration No. 87) the ground is black lac, which has assumed a brown tint, owing to a substratum of red-coloured lac. The design is simple and dignified, being a part of the wooden structure of a bridge; the piers are mother-of-pearl, the iron bands of lead, the upper portion of gold, in laid with tesseræ in gold and lacquer Artistic inros are said to have originated with Matahei.

The other lacquerer of distinction, founder of a school, who lived in the seventeenth century, and with whose works we are fairly familiar, was Koma Kiuhaku. Authentic specimens of his work are somewhat rare, although he lived to an old age. An inro in the writer's possession, representing three sparrows flying, is chiefly distinguishable for the boldness of the design,



No. 89.—*Box, by Nagahidé, Shunsho School. Eighteenth Century.* (*Author's Collection.*)

the somewhat early character of the nashiji ground, which is of the barley-sugar character, and for the fine colour of the black and red lac in the interior lining. He also produced a coloured lac finely dusted with gold and rubbed down: it then in some lights showed a metallic lustre, in others a brilliant coloured surface. Red under gold was the most usual form of

this. He was noted, too, for his Koma red, which has a steely look in certain lights due to an infusion of gold. The Komas excelled in hira-makiyé. Koma had a son, Yasutaka, who continued his father's work, and the school has continued up to the present day, the most noted disciple being Koma Kuansai, who attained a high distinction in the last century. Others of note were Bunsai, Kioriu, Yasunasa and Yasunari.

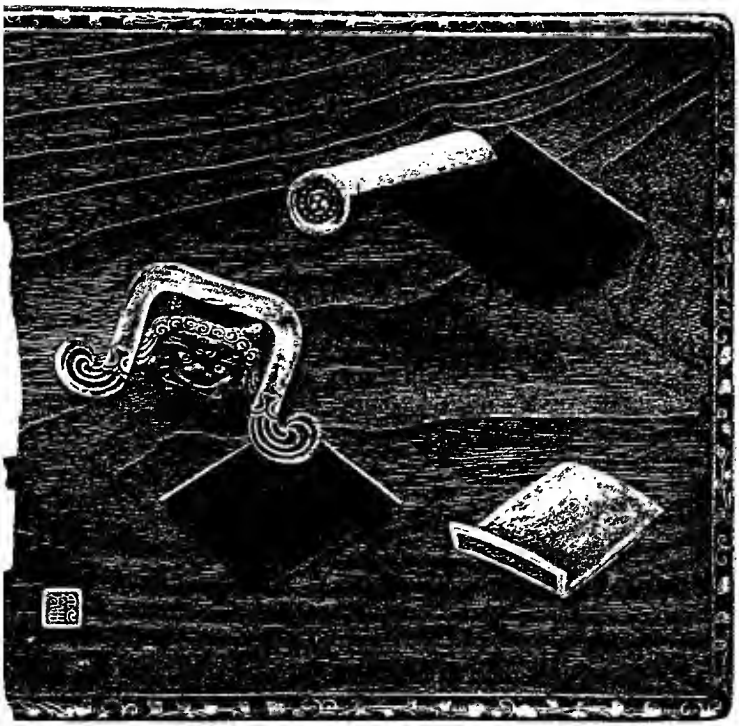
Both of the foregoing artists were in a sense the masters of Korin (A.D. 1661—1716), whose name has a magical sound in the ears of most collectors. Once seen, his style is the most easily recognisable of any; but it is somewhat difficult to distinguish between the work of master and pupils, for it is a style which is not difficult to copy. Korin was an artist with the pencil as well as in lacquer, and his designs with the former are notable for their originality and freedom from convention. The same applies to his works in lacquer, in which the designs are almost repellent by their vigour, and upon such a material as fine lac they appear out of place (see Illustration No. 88).

It will be noticed that, in this example, mother-of-pearl and pewter have been used. Korin was the first to introduce the latter to any important extent; he also used tin and lead. One distinguishing mark between the master and his imitators is in the gold; in both, the gold will probably be laid on very thickly, but in the master's case, it will be found to be of a rich red hue, pleasant and soft in tone, as opposed to a sickly yellow; it has been remarked by Mr. Kataoka, who has studied the subject very carefully, that Korin's gold is often full of minute specks which resemble gilded grains of sand.

By the majority of collectors, there is nothing so much sought after as a fine example of Korin's work; for myself I consider it altogether overrated; I admit its surprising vigour, but it has, to me, always an archaic appearance, and carries upon its face the fact that it is imperfect work, work so primitive that one is always surprised when one remembers that it only dates back to the beginning of the last century.

Mr. Anderson, however, is of opinion that "to those who

have learned to understand his aim, there appears a strength of character rarely apparent in the resplendent work of later years. As a decorative artist, he will always be a genius for the few, a charlatan for the many." (*Pictorial Art*, p. 137.) Mr. Gilbertson adds that "his productions are the eccentricities of



No. 90.—Suzuribako, by Ritsuō. Eighteenth Century.

a genius; in the hands of his imitators their absurdities stare one in the face too palpably; his style consequently soon disappeared, and deservedly so, for that reason."

The French collectors, who seldom make mistakes, are quietly amassing all the representative Korins they can lay hands on.

Another school which owes its origin to the teachings of Koyetsu, was that of Soyetsu. According to Mr. Ernest Hart, the pupil chiefly gave himself to the same delicate style of work affected by his master, although some of his productions are characterized by largeness and boldness of design. Tsuchida Soyetsu attained to a great age, and in the Gilbertson collection are two inros, upon which are statements that they were executed in the eighty-second and eighty-fourth years of his age; the lac has turned brown and semi-transparent. In a signed inro in the author's collection, the Mikado's treasure-cart is represented on one face; the lacquer is in relief, the frame-work of the cart is ornamented with Giobu-nashiji, the body is inlaid mother-of-pearl, and the wheels are lead. I may here remark that part, if not all, of the earlier inlayings in mother-of-pearl were composed of pieces with parallel sides, the lines of junction being vertical. Korin often shaped his mother-of-pearl, making it usually one piece, and later on the inlayers did not hesitate at inlaying one piece of mother-of-pearl over a curve, or even a sharp angle.

An artist, whose work was thoroughly original, but which often shows traces of imperfection, was Ogawa Ritsuō or Ritsuwō (1662—1746). The box (Illustration No. 90) is in brown wood of a coarse grain, the harder portion of which is left in relief, the corners and edges being in black lac with a gilt pattern; the inside and bottom is black lac. The decorations of the cover are in pottery, glazed green, and represent ornamental roof-tiles, one, it will be observed, having the tomoyé ornament, of which I have spoken elsewhere (p. 134). It is curious to note that on a piece of Kajikawa's the centres of the eddies of the water are formed of this ornament. The artist's seal, in the lower left corner, is in white pottery.

We now proceed to the consideration of work which leaves nothing to be desired, which in itself is the *ne plus ultra* of mechanical perfection, and against which the most hypercritical can only say that occasionally it exhibits traces of a luxurious effeminacy when compared with the masculine productions of those whom we have hitherto discussed. For my-

self, fine examples of Yamamoto Shunsho have a fascination which attaches to the work of no other master. Messrs. Gilbertson, Alexander, Trower, and especially the French collectors, have specimens, whose aristocratic mien makes their



No. 91.—*Suzuribako, School of Koma. Eighteenth Century.*

fellows look vulgar and insignificant. No one who has handled a piece can fail to recognise its perfection. The very silkiness of its surface is a marvel. It can well be imagined that work such as this is incapable of reproduction. It will not photograph satisfactorily, its glossy surface giving

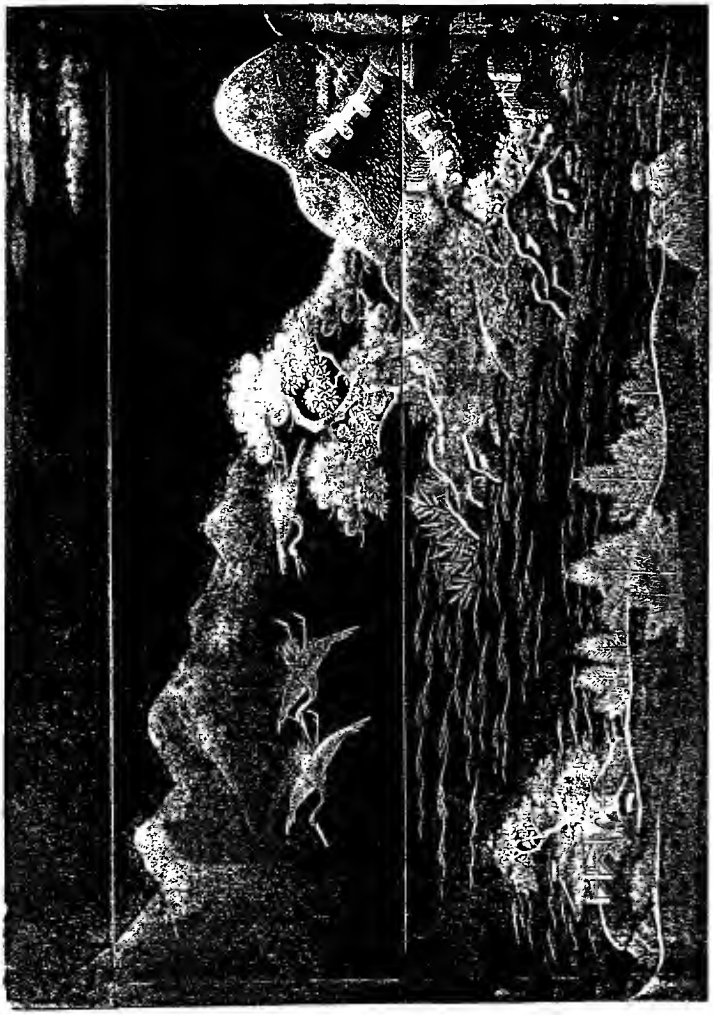
off an infinity of reflections. Mechanical reproduction, wood engraving, and chromo-lithography all fail, and the examples here illustrated, and in fact all the other lac objects, have been selected because they are less intractable than others. I wish I could refer my readers to individual pieces in our National Museums, which they could study, but this is impossible, for they do not possess them.

I have been unable to ascertain definitely the date when Yamamoto Shunsho lived. It was probably at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. Mr. Anderson mentions that he was alive in 1780, but this was almost certainly a descendant. In the example of the work of his pupil (Illustration No. 89), the ground is black, the cranes are in silver lac, and the reeds are drawn in gold with a powdering of gold—the whole is in hira-makiyé, or flat-work.

The best-known name in the annals of the lac producers is that of Kajikawa, and the work of this family is the favourite with the majority of collectors. Mr. Gilbertson has no less than a hundred signed inros by them, and he considers that by their admirable taste and skill they and the Komas have raised that article to the highest level of a work of Art. He is of opinion, too, that the first Kajikawa has never been excelled in the beauty and perfection of his black lac, or the richness of his nashiji, and that his gold often rivals Korin's. To this is added sumptuous workmanship, a lavish display of gold, and a very full design. The groundwork is usually nashiji thickly and profusely laid on, the design a landscape, abounding in mountains, lakes, houses, and with a foreground of cunningly modelled rocks and foliage. The small portion which remains for the sky will probably be tenanted with cranes. The box which is illustrated here (No. 92) is principally noteworthy for the splendid black brown upon which the gold is richly laid; sides, top, the interior, and even tho bottom, all show magnificent workmanship.

There are many other lacquerers who have a place in the first rank, but of whom little can be said here; Koami Nagataka who founded a school, Masazané, the three brothers Nagatoshi,

Yoshihide, and Nagata Yuji, Hakusai, Nagahidé Mitsutoshi,



No. 92.—Inro, by Kajikawa. Eighteenth Century. (Author's Collection.)

and Hara Yoyusai, all at the latter part of the eighteenth

century, and in this, Harui, Hoitsu, Inagawa, Jokasai, Kakosai, Kanetomo, Kikugawa, Kiyokawa, Kuanshiosai, Kuanyosai, Seisei Korin, Ogawa Shomin, Senreisai, Shiomi Masanori, Shokasai, Shomosai, a celebrated maker of encrusted work, who encrusted inros in conjunction with Shibayama (see *post* Chapter XIII.), Tosen, Toshirio, Toyosai, Tsuné-on, Zeshin. Mr. Gilbertson has examples in his collection by two hundred and fifty masters, nearly all of whose work is of the first order.

Our Illustration (No. 91) shows the extent to which decoration was carried in good work; here the groundwork is avanturine. The design includes a pipe case (gold lac), tobacco pouch (brown and gold lac), with silver fastener, similar in design to the dragon-head on the Ritsuō (Illustration No. 90), and inro (gold, with inlay of mother-of-pearl); the two beads on the string are in black and red lac, in high relief; the tea jar is of red and black lac, with ivory cover; its case is of gold lac; the jar behind has a lid of tortoiseshell; the guri lac box in the left lower corner is in red lac.

It may be well here to note some of the principal articles which were made of lacquer, and to what purpose they were put.

First of all we have the large suites of furniture, now seldom met with in a complete state in Europe, because whenever they come into the market they are split up by the dealers for the purposes of sale. H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh has a complete set, made of Daimio lac, which bears the badge of Prince Toda. In this are included two tansu or stands on which the set of boxes, nine in number, and a tray, are placed. The boxes include large ones for holding papers, MSS., and books, kobako, or incense game box, and a kodansu, a small cabinet for holding the incense. There is also a shodai, or sloping reading desk, and the suzuri-bako, or writing-case.

Suzuribakos come over in some quantity to Europe (see Illustrations Nos. 90 and 91), and are not, of course, always made for sets. The Fine Art Society's Exhibition included a considerable number, and in nothing was there a finer display of lac. Then we have the picnic boxes (bentobakos) (see

Illustration No. 55), mirror cases, fans, and lastly the oblong-shaped boxes, which serving here the purpose of glove boxes, are supposed to have been utilised in like manner in their native land. This is not so. Their use was as letter-carriers. A letter when written was folded and placed inside, and the box tied round by the writer with a silken cord; much stress was laid upon this cord (which is sometimes of very large dimensions and resplendent in colour), and upon the correct method of tying it. The box was then taken to its destination by a servant, who sometimes even had his mouth covered with a cloth so that he might not breathe upon it, where the letter was removed by the recipient. The answer was returned either in the same box or one belonging to its writer. Upon certain occasions the boxes were retained as a gift by the recipient, and this was usually the case when the despatch came from a nobleman. It is needless to add that few of the boxes found in our shops have ever served this purpose.

Lastly we have the inro, which has been so frequently mentioned in this chapter. An inro formed a necessary part of a gentleman's attire. It was attached by a silk cord to a netsuké and strung through the sash. It was used for medicine powders, for perfumes, and as a seal box.*

An inro has usually four trays, one fitting on to the other with mathematical precision. Inros are made of metal, wood, ivory, crystal, bark, shell mosaic, and tortoiseshell, besides wood lacquered. Artistic inros were first introduced by Matahei in the seventeenth century.

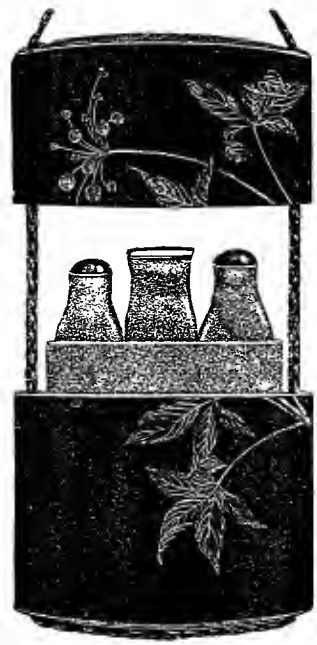
In conclusion, the following remarks upon collecting lacquer may not be out of place. Mr. Gilbertson, on this subject, writes as follows :—"If a collector is compelled, from want of

* Seals for a long period took, and do still, the place of a signature. They were small blocks of wood or metal on which was engraved the owner's seal. This was moistened on a vermilion pad and stamped in one or more places on the document. Pictures, and even books, received the seal of the author. Naturally this opened the door to forgery, and so educated persons have for long placed their signature as well as their seal. The abandonment of seals is now being urged in high quarters, so that another reason for the disuse of inros is imminent.

space or for any similar reason, to confine himself to one particular class of Japanese Art work, he cannot do better than select inros as the most desirable object. If the netsukés which were attached to them are added, there is no question as to what his choice should be. As illustrations of the history, mythology, and folk-lore of the country they are hardly so rich as the metal-work, or the netsukés; but, as regards that extremely interesting branch of Japanese Art—the branch in which they stand and have always stood absolutely supreme—the art of working in lacquer, the inro is of surpassing value. It is there one must look for the most perfect examples of lacquer work of every description. Not that larger works, such as writing boxes, perfume boxes, etc., do not afford equally fine examples of the work of the great artists—finer, indeed, from a pictorial point of view, because of the larger spaces available; but in the inro one often finds a treatment of the subject and of the material that would be inapplicable to the larger surface. The very limit of space and the form in the inro often bring out the artistic knowledge of the designer—very frequently the executant at the same time—in a most remarkable manner. Wonderful harmony both of colour and composition are often combined with a minuteness of detail that makes one wonder what sort of eyes and hands the lacquerers possessed."

Every collector has his own views on the subject, and my readers will no doubt have gathered that there is a branch of Japanese Art which attracts me as much as lacquer. But there is no doubt there are few artistic pursuits which can be cultivated at so small a cost, and with so much probability of its being a good investment—a goal which the collector so frequently aspires to—as that which Mr. Gilbertson has advocated. For a few pounds specimens can be obtained, the merit of which none can dispute, and which will be examples to all who see them of the pitch of perfection to which workmanship can attain; the test of familiarity and careful study will only enhance, as it shows, their value—and this is the crucial test to apply to all arts, and it is one which few of the huge, expensive modern productions of Japan will submit to.

The newness of a piece of lacquer may often be certified by smelling the interior, if it be a box or suchlike. It takes many years for an object made of lac to lose its oleaginous smell if it is not exposed to the air. I have never been able to diagnose exactly the scent of old work, but there is a dryness about it which is unmistakable. Another way of distinguishing old from new wares is by examining the edges of the designs; for instance, in the piece No. 92, if it were modern the lines of the hills would not have that clean crisp look, but a gummy, hazy appearance would be found, extending into the sky around them. It is always suspicious to find no appearance of wear on the bottom of an old box, especially at the corners. The difference in the appearance between good and bad gold can soon be distinguished; the former never, the latter soon tarnishing. It is needless to say examine the workmanship; that may be good sometimes in modern pieces, in which case they are worth having. The odour of new lac is said to affect many people very seriously with a complaint termed lacquer poisoning; in mild cases it affects the skin, but in severe instances it upsets the system entirely.



No. 93.—Inro, by Hosetsu (Author's Collection.)

The age of a piece, or rather the date beyond which it cannot be placed, may often be approximately ascertained by studying the design. For instance, many designs can be traced to Hokusai and so cannot be more than a century old. As Mr. Anderson points out, the great majority of the deco-

rations seen upon lacquered objects are merely copied by the draughtsmen from pictures by noted painters. Honnami Koyetsu and Koma Kiuhaku were the first to invent their own designs.

Collectors must not be disappointed if they meet with few signatures upon lacquer. The ordinance never to buy without a signature does not apply here. Large pieces are seldom signed; when they are, that fact generally tends to raise suspicion. Inros much more frequently bear the name of the maker, sometimes hidden away in the interior or at the side of the piece. These are made in a variety of ways; Korin sometimes models his heavily in the body of the work, at others merely scratches it with the point of a needle in the interior. Yosei's signature is always incised. The Kajikawas painted theirs in gold lac on the lower edge, adding a sort of urn-shaped seal. But, after all, signatures should not count for much. A few hours' careful study o good pieces, under an intelligent master, countervails all this after which, as the saying is, *il ne faut pas être grand clerc en matière d'Art* to distinguish between fine and inferior work.

CHAPTER XII.

METAL-WORK.

JAPANESE Art metal-work, as known here, consists of the following branches:—

1. *Okimono*, or ornaments to be placed on a platform: consisting either of articles used for sacred purposes—such as statuettes of deities and supernatural animals (dragons, shishi, etc.), candlesticks, incense-burners (*ko-iré*), flower-vases, gongs, and bells—or for household adornment, such as flower-vases (*hana-iké*), bowls to hold miniature gardens, incense-burners, and figures of animals (ordinarily fitted to use in the last-named capacity), such as deer, tortoises, toads, fish, crabs, etc.

2. Articles for household use, such as fire-holders (*hibachi*), mirrors (*kagami*), saké kettles (*chō-shi*), and writing-cases (*suzuri-bako*).

3. Armour, including masks, spears, and swords.

4. Articles for personal use, notably pipes (*kiseru*), pouch ornaments, beads (*ojime*), buttons to hold the cases in the sash, brush cases, inkstands (*yataté*), etc.

5. Cloisonné.

As regards the first branch. Sacred treasures ("*hō-motsu*," or "precious things") consist of the adornments of the altar, or gifts bestowed in olden times by nobles in return for the guardianship of their family tombs, or objects acquired by the bouzu (or priests) for the ornamentation of their shrines. Although a considerable dispersal of temple treasures has surreptitiously taken place, so much so that the government has

not only prohibited their sale, but has recently taken steps to catalogue them (a preliminary, no doubt, to annexing them), not many of those made of metal find their way here, probably on account of their considerable bulk and weight; those which do, consist for the most part of incense-burners, candlesticks, and flower-holders.

Household ornaments are always simple, and few in number. The temples in Japan number seventy thousand, but the houses of persons sufficiently well-to-do to possess ornaments of much artistic merit or value must always have been very much less than that. It must be remembered, too, that the house even of the keenest collector would not be cumbered as one of ours with works of Art here, there, and everywhere, but, on the contrary, would be noticeable for the simplicity and fewness of the subjects set out. There might be a store in the godown or safe, but these would never be displayed simultaneously. An incense-burner and a flower-holder would represent the whole of the metal ornaments in the living-room of a gentleman's house.

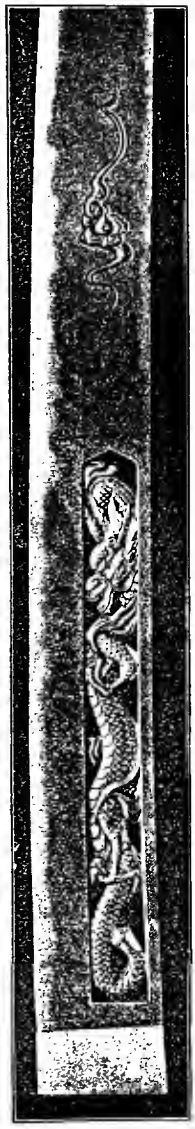
Metal *okimono*, properly so called, are not, to my mind, calculated to arouse much interest outside of their own country for these reasons—they are by no means invariably of elegant shape; when they represent animal forms they seldom are notable for fine or even passable modelling; the work of a few men, Seimin, Toün, Joï, etc., excepted (see Illustration, page 89), their principal merit lies in the rare excellence of the patinas which they assume; but even this bears no comparison either in quality or variety with that which we find on the smaller articles, to which attention will presently be directed. Of course there are exceptions, but a glance at the majority of the specimens contained in our museums at South Kensington, Birmingham, and elsewhere, will show that their value is more archæological than artistic.

The metal articles contained under the second heading have already been discussed in Chapter VII., page 88.

The third class of metal-work covers a larger area than we can traverse here. The armour in which the Japanese arrayed himself was of the most formidable and extensive character,

and its makers became as skilled and noted in this as in other branches of work; but really fine specimens are seldom seen in this country, those which are displayed in shops being seldom other than those of the rank and file. Spears, too, are not a subject to interest many persons, and masks will be treated of in the next chapter. There only remains, therefore, in this section the sword, but that is an article upon which a volume might be written without exhausting what is of interest concerning it.

It can readily be imagined that in a country where internal wars were being constantly carried on, where private quarrels grew into family feuds, where the vendetta was unhindered by law and applauded by society, where the slightest breach of etiquette could only be repaired by the death of one or other of the parties, and where a stain of any sort upon one's character necessitated suicide with one's own weapon, attention was very early directed towards obtaining perfection in the only article of defence or offence which a Japanese carried. Nor would this article long remain unornamented in a community where artistic instincts were universal, and jewellery and other adornments were not the mode. Consequently we find attention first of all directed towards the perfection of the blade, until for temper it had no rivals in the world, and many a one not only performed miraculous feats, but became endued with such a thirst for blood that its owner was interdicted



No. 94.—Muramasa Blade. (Gilbertson Collection.)

from wearing it. There are few of these blades which ever come to this country, but we give an engraving (No. 94) of one by a celebrated maker, Muramasa. The whole subject of blades and their makers is replete with interest, but it also appeals to so limited a class that we cannot dwell upon it longer here.

The furniture of the sword and its ornamentation is a study of the most varied kind, and one which, if taken up, is certain to interest in an ever-increasing manner. At present there are but few who have occupied themselves with it, and therefore I propose to state shortly why I consider that it should enlist the sympathies of a larger class.

Personal ornaments illustrate better than anything else the individuality of their wearer, and collectively the sense of the nation. Especially is this the case where the article in question is worn as a privilege, is regarded with deference, is handed down as an heirloom, and is the subject of the most carefully prescribed etiquette.*

The manufacture of the sword and its adornment has for centuries been a profession adopted by artists of the highest attainments, who have spared nothing to render it an article of the highest artistic value. The ornament lavished upon it illustrates the religious and civil life, the history, the heroism, the folk-lore, the manners and customs of the people, the physical aspect and natural history of the country. These have been executed in every variety of metal, so that a fresh and distinct interest attaches on this account, and they are so varied that it is almost impossible to find two alike, although swords are usually made in pairs. This variety often lets new light into a story or legend, from the artists' different interpretations of it. Careful selection and systematic arrangements increase both interest and value. The illustrations are portable in size; like all the best work of the nation, like the makers themselves, they are diminutive. Five hundred of them can go into a coin cabinet.† They are

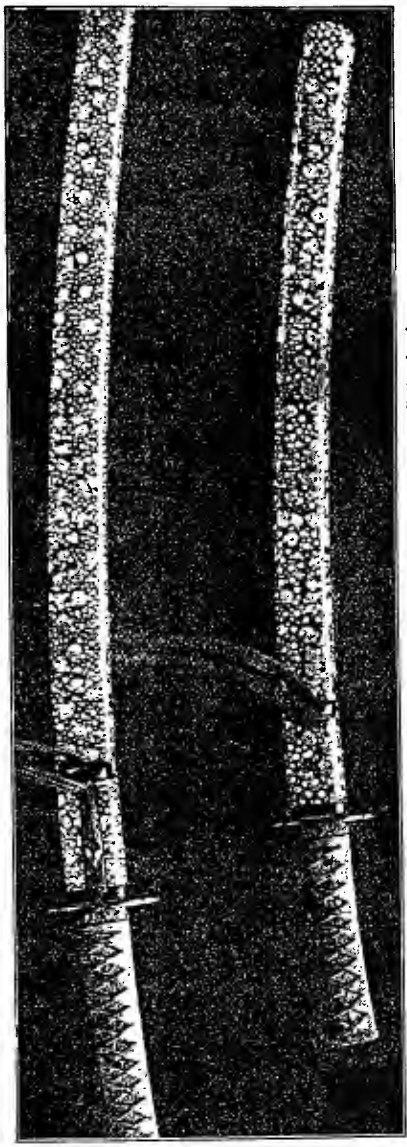
* For details as to this see Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," page 222.

† At a meeting on Japanese Art held the other day, appreciative laughter ensued when a further advantage of this diminutiveness was mentioned, namely, that a score could be smuggled home in one's waistcoat pocket, unknown to one's better half.

at present reasonable in price. A few shillings will purchase a piece of workmanship so marvellous that London and Parisian jewellers admit they could not imitate it at any price. We have lately seen at the Londesborough sale swords and daggers with no greater artistic wealth than these possess fetching hundreds of pounds. The time may be long in coming when Japanese arms will realise such prices, but now that their use is abolished and their makers have ceased to be, they must have an increasing value.

Lesser advantages are that they are not breakable, and that they improve invariably in appearance when they reach home and have been subjected to careful cleaning.

To these reasons might be added that just now the curiosity-hunter is in sad straits for want of a new hunting-ground. With every



No. 95.—A Pair of Swords. (W. J. Stuart Collection.)

civilised nation on the alert, and as eagerly disposed to join the chase as the old country, it is not surprising that the ground is getting cleared, that hunting the old game is far too expensive, and that he who would spring fresh must go far afield.

The wearing of the sword, the precious possession of lord and vassal, "the soul of the Samurai," was, as I have stated, a privilege which only those of a certain rank were entitled to. In the time of the Ashikagas (sixteenth century) the fashion of wearing two swords, one (*katana*) about three feet in length for offence and defence, and another (*wakizashi*), about two feet, for the "happy dispatch" (*seppuku* or *hara kiri*) came into vogue. There were also the *chisakatana*, the same size as the katana but lighter, for court use; the *aikuchi*, or dirk without a guard, worn by doctors and inferior officials; the *jintachi*, or two-handed war-sword, and the *mamori* or stiletto. In full dress the colour of the scabbard was black with a tinge of green and red, and so it varied as occasion required, thus giving employment to the lacquerers.* In the pair of swords here illustrated (No. 95), the scabbards are of shark's palate, filled in with black lac; the taste of the wearer was displayed in the colours, size, and method of wearing his weapon. "Daimios often spent extravagant sums upon a single sword, and small fortunes upon a collection. A Samurai, however poor, would have a blade of sure temper and rich mountings, deeming it honourable to suffer for food that he might have a worthy emblem of his rank." †

Upon a child being presented at his birth to the temple of his father's particular deity he receives, if a boy, two fans amongst other gifts.‡ These are harbingers of the swords he will ultimately wear. At the age of three a sword belt is girded round his waist; at seven, if a Samurai, he wears two swords suited to his size and indicative of his rank; at fifteen these are exchanged for the swords he will carry throughout

* Some of the finest lacquer to be met with will be found upon the sword sheaths. The variety, too, is remarkable.

† Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," page 225.

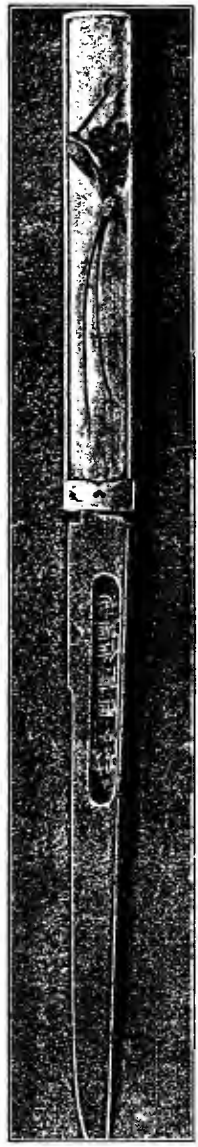
‡ A girl receives a cake of pomade, which should bring good looks; both receive flax thread in hope of longevity.

life and hand down unsullied to his heir. All these dates are much observed.*

The most important pieces of a sword are :

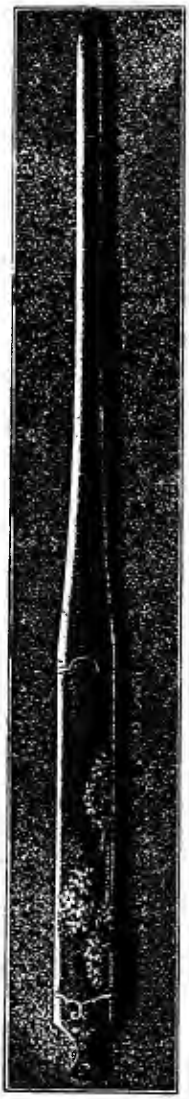
The *tsuba* or guard, usually a flat piece of metal, circular or oval in form, which is perforated by a triangular aperture for the transmission of the blade. At either side are one or more openings for the lodgment of the tops of two accessory implements called the kodzuka and kogai. These openings are often found closed up with metal, indicating that the guard has been adapted to a different sword.

The *kodzuka* (Illustration No. 96) is the handle of a short dagger (*ko-katana*) which has its place on one side of the scabbard. The kodzuka and blade in the Illustration do not belong to one another. The former is of ivory, with the grasshopper in mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell, and dates from the last century ; the blade is one of the celebrated Umetada's, and bears his signature : it was made in the sixteenth century. The *kogai* (Illustration No. 97) is a skewer inserted on the other side, and which, it is said, was left by its possessor in the body of an adversary killed in battle, as a card of ownership. Kogai are not found in all swords, and are not met with in any numbers ; they are usually made of a malleable



No. 96.—Kodzuka (Author's Collection.)

* New Year's Day is the birthday of every Japanese ; no matter upon what day they are born, they are considered to be one year old on the ensuing New Year's Day.



No. 97.—Kogai.
(Author's Collection.)

material, and ornamented similarly to the kodzuka.

The *menuki* are small ornaments placed on either side of the hilt to give a better grasp to it. They are also used to ornament the scabbard, especially on the wakizashi or short swords, and on daggers. Imitations of menuki find a place in almost every curio shop, but they can usually be detected by their being either cast or rolled out of common metal. I recently saw no less than 1,200 for sale in one shop, and not worth the freight they had cost. No one should buy these or similar things without first handling and examining with a glass some really good ones.

The *kashira* is the pommel or cap of metal which fits on to the head of the handle, being secured to its place by a cord passed through two lateral eyes. The *fuchi* is an oval ring of metal which encircles the base of the handle, and through its centre the blade passes. The fuchi and kashira were always made by the same artist, who usually signed his name in the underside of the latter (Illustrations Nos. 98 and 98A). The first of these illustrates the story of Raiko killing the Demon Spider; it will be noted how the story is told on both parts. The bases of this fuchi and kashira are iron, the spider is in copper, Raiko is in shakudo, etc., with gold inlay and silver sword. The second pair illustrates the Mikado's carriage covered with cherry blossom on the occasion of a fête; here each flower is cut from solid silver, the carriage is in gold, the base iron. The third pair is gold wire inlaid in iron. In the fourth the birds, branches, etc., are

carved in relief out of iron. Now these marvels of workmanship, for they are nothing else, are only samples out of hundreds, each of which may be relied upon to furnish the same variety and excellence. They have only been selected because they lent themselves to reproduction. Why then do they fail to attract the attention of collectors? A leading London goldsmith, on being shown them, said that similar work *might* be copied here, but he dare not say at what cost, yet for the moment, if care be exercised in the selection,



No. 98.—*Fuchi-kashira.* (*Author's Collection.*)

equally good specimens to those illustrated may be obtained here at a few shillings each.*

There are also the *kurikata*, or cleat through which the "sagewo" (or cord for holding back the sleeves whilst fighting) passes, and the *kojiri* or metal end to the scabbard.

It is difficult to say upon which of these pieces the best and most elaborate workmanship was lavished. As a rule makers of one part will be found to have executed others, though we encounter many names only upon one class.

* A word of caution. Dealers usually try to make one buy these and similar things in lots. Don't. Rather pay a much higher price for the option of selecting.

In the chapters which have preceded this, many of the illustrations have been taken from tsubas and kodzukas. For tsuba specimens see pages 7, 12, 15, 16, 42, 45, 49, 51, 52, 101 and 107; and kodzukas, pages 1, 5, 22, 27, 54, 121 and 122.

No idea of the artistic value of sword furniture can be gained from the swords which one meets with by scores in every Japanese shop. This rubbish, for it is nothing else, consists of the weapons which were discarded upon the adoption of European uniforms, and a hunt through hundreds of them will not repay the trouble incurred of washing one's hands. It goes without saying that these cast-offs have been carefully scrutinised before they left their native land. For some reason, which I have not been able to ascertain, almost all the best guards and other appurtenances of the sword come over here in a detached state; very few fine swords make their appearance, but a quantity of most elaborately ornamented specimens, usually covered with marine animals, make their appearance. The origin of these is mysterious; they look very much like creations for the outside market; if they are not, they evidence a debased period of Art. It is curious that the decorations of many of the swords are taken from piscatory subjects; for instance, a lobster in metal will form the kojiri or ferrule at the bottom of the sheath, the lacquer sheath will have lumps of coral let into it, and all the metal ornaments will have representations of coral-divers, or fish, or seaweed. There was no Imperial navy whose officers could have required so many swords—why this adornment then?

Foreigners have much difficulty in obtaining information about Japanese metal-workers of the past. There is a work, So-ken Ki-sho, published in 1781, which gives biographies of the most noted, but no one has at present been found sufficiently enterprising to translate it. M. Gonse's notes on tsuba-makers are principally of service to collectors from the beautiful reproductions attached thereto, for he has not attempted to make any classification into schools or to distinguish between styles. Mr. Hart's lectures are too concise to do much in this way, but they are the best attempt hitherto. Fortunately in metal, as in lac, a good eye and a certain amount of experience

will enable a distinction to be made as to what should be acquired and what shunned; the majority of collectors appear at present to be content with this, for I know of but one who has as yet attempted any classification into masters and schools.

Discarding the makers whose works are not likely to be met with, the following are the most noteworthy.

The Miochin family, which date back in continuous record to the twelfth century, and have received constantly recurring marks of royal favour in testimony of the excellence of their



No. 98A.—*Fuchi-kashira.* (*Author's Collection.*)

work. They were great armourers, but they also showed their skill in other ways, as, for instance, in the eagle in the South Kensington Museum and the sixteenth-century dragon (Illustration No. 99). Sword-guards by the Miochins of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may occasionally be picked up.

In the fifteenth century appeared the Gotō family, whose work is held in higher estimation in Japan than any other: it has too much sameness and academic style to please those who enjoy the work of artists who deal with the subject with

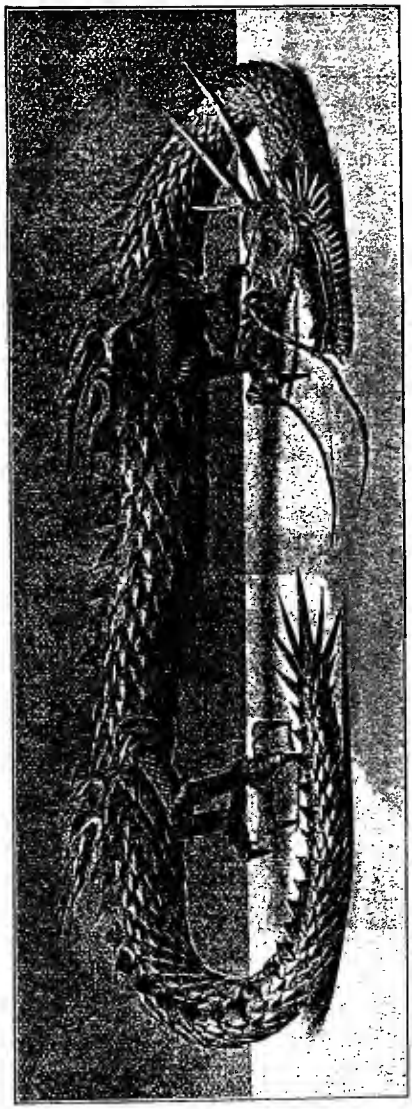
freer and larger aims. The founder of the house, Gotō Yūjō, lived in the fifteenth century (1440—1512), and was named after the renowned Shōgun Yoshimasa Yūjō. This dignity was conferred on his descendants, not only by the Ashikagas, but after their fall, by Hidéyoshi, Iyéyasu, and the Tokugawas. As Mr. Hayashi remarks in his "Catalogue of Artists," the house being attached to the Shōgunate always produced works of the highest quality, and retained its traditional renown, its successors being selected, not in direct descent, but from those who showed the greatest talent. In 1603 the house of Yūjō moved with the Shōgun Iyéyasu to Yedo, where their descendants worked until the present century. A branch of the house remained at Kyoto, and were consequently known as the Kīo-Gotōs. The Gotōs were especially noted for their work in nanakoji* on shakudo. During the lifetime of the earlier members of the family, tsubas were usually of hard-tempered iron, and consequently not suitable to their delicate work; hence we find the best examples of the elder Gotōs upon kodzukas and fuchi-kashiras. It requires some experience to distinguish between fine and inferior work in nanakoji; a magnifying glass will, however, show the perfect regularity and shape of the small dots in good work.

With the sixteenth century piercing and chasing, and in rare instances inlaying and damascening, came into vogue with tsuba-makers. Three names of note in connection with this change are Kanéïyé, Nobuïyé, and Metada (or Umé-Tada). The first has been called "the creator of artistic sword-guards." The work still continued as a rule to be marked by an absence of extraneous ornament in the shape of gold, silver, or alloys; but it was ornamented, in the case of Kanéïyé, by landscapes in low relief, in that of Nobuïyé by subjects from still life executed in a bolder manner and higher relief, and in that of Umé-Tada by a free use of the graver. Umé-Tada has been called "the master of masters;" his name has been used by a number of men of later date and inferior calibre.

With the close of the sixteenth century the period of

* Nanakoji, so called from its resemblance to fish roe, is produced by punching the surface into a texture of small dots.

constant wars was drawing to an end, and the country was on the eve of an era of peace which lasted for two hundred and fifty years; the sword-guard, which in former times was of no service unless it was of a toughness sufficient to withstand the whole force of a blow dealt with a two-handed sword, might now be adapted for court use and for the adornment of the person. Consequently we see from this time onwards an increasing change in the character of the metal used and the ornamentation employed, and we find in the ateliers at Osaka damascenings of gold and silver in the iron, the son of Kanéïyé encrusting his work with copper, and translucent enamels being introduced by Hirata Dōnin. We



No. 99.—Dragon by Miochin. (E. Hart Collection.)

have also Kinai at work, whose elegant pierced tsubas elicit the admiration of everybody (see Illustration No. 100).

The close of the seventeenth century was notable for the rise of the three schools of Nara, Yokoya, and Omori. The Nara school took its name from Nara Toshitéru, and attracted to itself upon its foundation a number of artists whose works have ever since been sought for by connoisseurs—namely, Nara

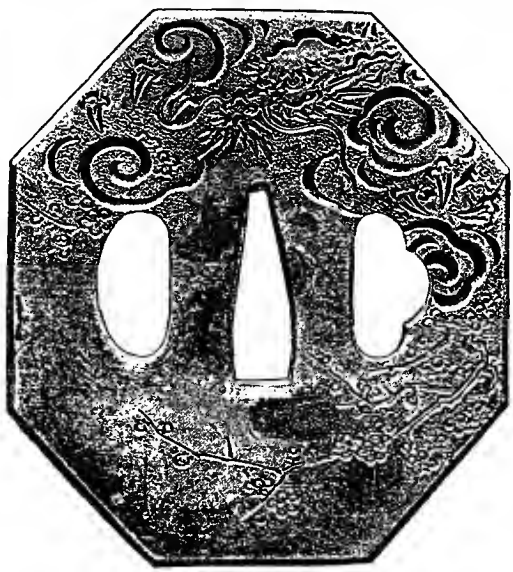


No. 100.—Tsuba by Kinai. (Gilbertson Collection.)

Toshinaga (1667—1736), Yasuchika (1670—1744), Hamano Shōzui (1697—1769), and Joï (17 —1761). Of these Shōzui appears to have had the largest number of followers, amongst them being Chokuzai, Kunichika, Kuarakusai, Juzui, Hozui, Kuzui, and Kozui. The school was a revolutionary one, and started as a protest against the academic style of the Gotōs.

The school of Yokoya—named after its founder Sōmin (1670—1733), who received the title of Yokoya—arose about

the same time. The founder appears to have been Soyo, and Sōmin's successors were Terumasa (1705—1772), who joined hands with the Omori school, as did his nephew Teruhidé (1730—1798), and Konkwan (1743—1800). We give a tsuba of silvered copper by Somin; his works are rare (M. Gonse mentions only four in the Paris collections). What the style developed to in the hands of his follower Konkwan may be seen in the tsuba of Narahira contemplating Fuji, at page 7.



No. 101.—*Tsuba by Sōmin.* (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

The Omori School was founded by Shigémitsu (1693—1725) and produced Soten, noted for his pierced and gilt tsubas with subjects of battle scenes; Teruhidé, known for his modelling of waves and imitation of avanturine, may be classed in this school, as in that of Yokoya. Besides this may be mentioned the schools of Ishiguro (Yedo), with Masatsuné (1760—1828), Masayoshi and Shinzui (1789—1842), and Hosono, of the early part of this century, whose flat, incised work is remarkable for the introduction of coloured surfaces.

The English and French authorities differ widely in their catalogues of the most noted artists in metal; it may be well, therefore, to conclude this summary with the notice of the more modern men as given by M. Gonse.

"What a galaxy of masters illuminated the close of the eighteenth century! What a multitude of names and works would have to be cited in any attempt to write a monograph upon sword furniture! The humblest artisan, in this universal outburst of Art, is superior, in his mastery of the metals, to any one we could name in Europe. How many artists worthy of a place in the rank are only known to us by a single piece, but which is quite sufficient to evidence their power! From 1780 to 1840 the art was at fever heat, the creative faculty produced marvels. Tomoyoshi, Nagatsuné, Masanori, Fusamasa, Takanori, Munémitsu, Joï, Munénori, Kadzunori, Séidzui, Toshihiro, Tomonobu, Terutsugu, Masayoshi, Teïkan, Kadzutomo, Masatsuné, Masafusa, Ossatsuné, Yoshihidé, Yoshitsugu, Morichika, Yasuyuki, Yasuchika, Haruakira, Ekijio, Nobuyoshi, Toshimasa, Hirosada, Katsuki, Natsuo, all practised the art with consummate ability during this period."

The decoration of the sword furniture showed symptoms of decline early in the present century. Working in hard wrought iron was first of all shirked, and similar effects were endeavoured to be produced by castings; then the decoration ran riot and transgressed all limits, so that many of the pieces made between 1840—1870 could never have been used for the purposes for which they were professedly intended; such products are remarkable in a way, as showing the lengths to which elaboration may be carried, but they can never stand for a day beside the dignified workmanship of an earlier date.

Imitations of sword guards are now being imported into the market. These are cast from old specimens, and can usually be detected by holding them at the point of one's finger and hitting them sharply with another piece of metal, when they will emit a dull sound only, whereas a fine old guard will ring like the best bell-metal. It is well to test all guards in this way, but it must be recollected that guards with much piercing will not ring, and that many of those made since the beginning of this century are of such malleable iron as not to stand the test.

It is a question which has not yet been solved whether some of the old guards may not be castings, even some of those which are chased. The difference between wrought and cast iron is that the latter contains from 1½ to 4 per cent. of carbon, the former hardly any; but it is possible to anneal or toughen cast iron by a process known as cementation, that is, by a surface removal of carbon. Many of the guards are covered with oxide of iron, to which they owe much of their beauty.

As I have already mentioned, one of the principal factors which should give to Japanese metal-work an interest is the variety of material which is introduced, and the remarkable way in which it is treated. Amongst the swords and pikes in the Londesborough sale, do we find anything to approach it? Certainly not. Iron, steel, gold, silver are used with much unapproachable enrichment; but nowhere that patina to which we are treated in Japanese work. And yet this unique factor is altogether overlooked by the many who only glance at the subject, although it is not a difficult matter to understand or appreciate. Professor Brinckmann,* who is one of the few directors of museums who have as yet seen the advantage of recognising Japanese Art, has acquired, at a small cost, in Hamburg, no less than 1,200 specimens of sword-guards, and these he has arranged according to subject, metal, and design. He considers that they are of more use if they illustrate, as they do, the manner and customs of the country, the various metals employed, and the versatility of design, than if they are classified according to the men who made them. One cannot help comparing the treatment accorded to the same things in our South Kensington Museum, where they are hidden away in a frame in company with European casts, and so little cared for that most of them are upside down!†

* He informs me that the advantages to the trade of his city through his Japanese section have been remarkable. A new and prosperous industry has sprung up which is directly traceable to it, and recently a Hamburg firm carried off a contract for the furnishing of the Mikado's palace against all Europe, owing to their having the means at hand of ascertaining what that potentate's preconceived notions and requirements would be.

† The Museum has recently purchased 94 sword-guards; amongst these there are hardly a dozen which are worthy of a place there.

At a recent meeting of the British Association at Birmingham the value of Japanese alloys in metal-work to our operative classes was set forth in a paper read to them by Professor Roberts-Austen, and from it I am enabled to take the following particulars respecting shakudo and shibuichi, which are the principal alloys used. Analyses show that the former usually consists of about 95 per cent. of copper, 1½ to 4 of gold, 1 to 1½ of silver, and traces of lead, iron, and arsenic. The latter contains from 50 to 67 per cent. of copper, from 30 to 50 of silver, with traces of gold and iron.* The precious metals are here sacrificed in order to produce definite results; in the case of shakudo, the gold enabling the metal to receive a rich purple coat, or *patina* as it is called, when subjected to certain pickling solutions; in that of shibuichi, the alloy forcing the metal to assume a beautiful silver-grey tint under the ordinary atmospheric influences. It is one or other of these influences which gives the patina to all Japanese metals, and it is understood by that nation in a way which no other has yet arrived at. A worn-out patina will often re-assert itself by the aid of much handling, the moisture of the skin being all that is required. This shows the acuteness of the producer in forming his alloy, so that the formation of the patina should be assisted by a treatment which an article in every-day use is sure to obtain.

The three commonest pickles are said by Professor Roberts-Austen to be made up as follows, and are used boiling:

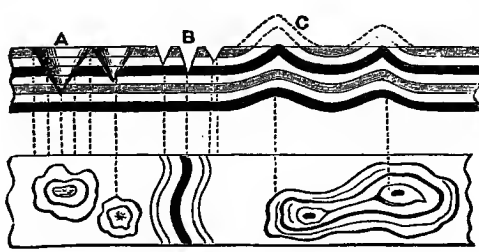
	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
Verdigris	438 grains	87 grains	220 grains
Sulph. of Copper	292 ,,	437 ,,	540 ,,
Nitre	—	87 ,,	—
Common Salt	—	146 ,,	—
Sulphur	—	233 ,,	—
Water	1 gallon	—	1 gallon
Vinegar	—	1 gallon	5 fluid drachms

As a perfect patina is one of the essential qualities of the article, care must be taken that it does not lose it. Collectors

* The derivation of the name shibuichi is "one-fourth," which is clearly incorrect.

will do well to remember this when cleaning their metal-work; I thought to improve some of my earliest acquisitions by rubbing them with a German paste; the result was disastrous, as it removed the patina instantly. I saw a notable collection of such ornaments the other day which the owner had reduced in value at least one-half, by ignorantly polishing with plate powder. The metal in all fine Japanese work is so good that it seldom requires more than a chamois leather to bring out all its qualities.

Upon bringing new purchases of metal-work home it is best to subject them to a thorough scrubbing with a nail brush, using warm water and Hudson's Extract of Soap; they should be thoroughly rinsed afterwards in clean water, dried before a fire and then rubbed with the leather. Where rust has taken



No. 102.—*Method of manufacture of Mokumé.*

hold of guards I have hitherto let them soak in vaseline for some time, but I am informed that to boil them for twenty minutes in water with which binoxalate of potass has been mixed is efficacious but perilous to patinas.

There is another Art material to be met with occasionally to which Professor Roberts-Austen directed the attention of the Birmingham workmen, and to which, in spite of its rarity, I must here refer, if only to emphasize his hope that it may be taken up by our manufacturers. This is mokumé (wood-grain). The Professor states that it is very rarely met with even in Japan, and that he had only seen six examples, but since then I have had the pleasure of showing him as many more. The diagram (No. 102) shows the method of manufacture. Thin sheets of alloys are soldered together, care being taken that

the metals which present diversity of colour come together. Conical holes (A) of varying depth are then drilled in the mass, or trench-like cuts (B). The mass is then hammered until the holes disappear, and are replaced by banded circles or lines; similar effects may be produced by making depressions in the back with blunted tools, so as to produce prominences (C), which are then filed down, and produce complicated sections, as shown in the lower portion of the diagram. The colours of the alloys may of course be developed by pickling.

Professor Roberts-Austen has succeeded in reproducing mokumé and every Japanese patina which he has met with excepting that known as "lobster" red. He is of opinion that many of the happiest effects in Japanese work have been the result of chance, an artificer becoming possessed of a mass of copper which, owing to the presence of certain impurities (of the nature of which he was unaware), took a wonderful patina. His use of any individual metal was never anything else than a sparing one, and therefore it can easily be understood that if this mass was, fortunately for him, of some size, it might almost last him a life-time. Since he mentioned this to me I have seen the probability of it demonstrated in various ways. For instance, in the Illustration No. 103, the pan of the hibachi carried by the servant is a wonderful piece of lobster-red, but it is not more than an eighth of an inch square. In the companion piece, which represents a gentleman and his servant, the lobster-red is used to a still smaller extent, namely, on the sword-hilt. This brings me to another matter, which the Professor emphasizes as a principal trait in Japanese metal-work, and one which our manufacturers should imitate, namely, its "extreme simplicity." The brilliant metals, gold and silver, are used most sparingly, only for enrichment, and to heighten the general effect; the precious metals are only employed where their presence will serve some definite end in relation to the design as a whole. What would one of their great masters think of some of our supreme efforts in this line? The silver stag, for instance, a yard high, given as one of Her Majesty's prizes at Ascot this year, which never could be even endurable until it tarnishes.

The various styles of engraving on metal are described by Mr. Audsley in his "Arts of Japan." They are shortly these: kébori, or fine hair-line chasing, where lines are chiselled out of varying depth and thickness, and effect is produced by the



No. 103.—*Kanemono. Eighteenth Century.* (*Author's Collection.*)

light and shade on their sides, any burr being cut off. It is this style which is most affected by the Japanese, especially when the engraver succeeds in imitating successfully the strokes of the painter's brush in the design which he is copying.

In hira-zōgan (*hira*, flat; *zōgan*, inlaying), or damascening, all lines are equal in depth, but their bottoms are widened, so as to receive and retain the gold or silver wire which is beaten into them. This and kébori are often used together.

Kata kiri-bori is where designs are cut in relief from portions of the metal raised for the purpose; this "is unmatched in the entire range of ornamental metal-work in Art." Here no advantage is obtained by other coloured metals, but light and shade only have to be relied upon. This literally sculptured work is almost entirely produced by a cold chisel and hammer, and in old work it is usually left untouched and unpolished.

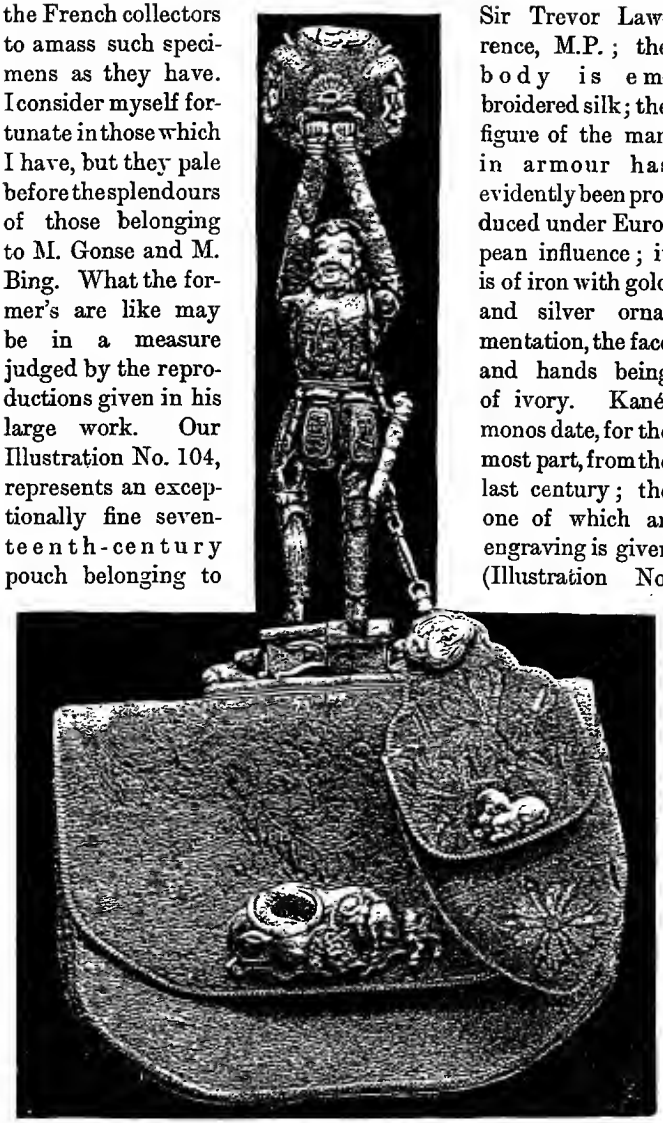
Lastly, there is the mixture of many processes, called kata-kiri-bori-zogan, or figured, sculptured, and encrusted metal chasing, or painting on metal, an achievement peculiarly Japanese. An alloy capable of taking a dark patina is used as the basis; much of the design consists of pierced work, and the remainder is in relief, encrusted and damascened.

The background of Japanese metal-work is often as remarkable as any part of it. The artist seldom omits to treat it in a way which adds to the decoration and to his labour. He does not hesitate to attempt a misty twilight, a night effect, or an imitation of wood or leather, and it is needless to say he succeeds. One thing only he usually avoids, and that is the bright polish which Western nations esteem so highly. Glitter and garishness are not in his line.

Besides sword furniture, the artists in metal have occupied themselves with a variety of articles, all of which testify to their exceeding ability with the graver. Pipes, hair-pins, ink-pots,* brush-holders, perfume-boxes, but, above all, the clasps *(kanémonos)* and beads of their tobacco pouches and the buttons *(kagami buta)* appertaining thereto. One must not judge of these from the miserable castings which are usually offered in curio shops; they do not often appear in the market now, although at one time they must have been fairly plentiful for

* For writing, a brush, a stick of what we call Indian ink, and a roll of mulberry leaves are used. These are carried on the person, the roll in the breast, the brush and inkstand in a case suspended from the girdle.

the French collectors to amass such specimens as they have. I consider myself fortunate in those which I have, but they pale before the splendours of those belonging to M. Gonse and M. Bing. What the former's are like may be in a measure judged by the reproductions given in his large work. Our Illustration No. 104, represents an exceptionally fine seventeenth-century pouch belonging to Sir Trevor Lawrence, M.P.; the body is embroidered silk; the figure of the man in armour has evidently been produced under European influence; it is of iron with gold and silver ornamentation, the face and hands being of ivory. Kanémonos date, for the most part, from the last century; the one of which an engraving is given (Illustration No.



No. 104.—*Pouch. Seventeenth Century.* (*Sir Trevor Lawrence Collection.*)

103) is of exceptional size; shakudo, gold in three tones, silver, and lobster-red copper, find a place in its composition.



No. 105.—*Iron Vase by Komai.* (*Author's Collection.*)

Of the history of Japanese cloisonné very little is known, and there are such differences of opinion concerning it amongst

professed experts that I shall not venture to touch upon it here.

These notes cannot be closed without reference to an artist, Komai, who recently died at a great age, and who produced masterpieces of damascening in gold (Illustration No. 105). Unfortunately many of the best are marred by the ugliness of their shape, which shows that they date from a period of decadence. They command a high price, but not too high, when the labour expended upon them is taken into consideration.

The translation of signatures upon lacquer, metal-work, or what not, is difficult and perplexing. More especially is this the case where, as often happens, the Japanese translator has a paucity of knowledge as to artists' names—not infrequently the same symbol may have two meanings, or the artist may have adopted a *nom de plume*, and in that case some quite unrecognisable name will be the result. The Japanese originally used Chinese symbols, each of them as a syllable or sometimes as a complete word; hence, each letter had a syllabic, not an alphabetic, form. This cumbersome method led to an abbreviation, so that instead of the whole, a part only was used; this was called kata kana, and a specimen of it will be found on the sword-guard at page 180. The trouble of writing this led again to the hira kana, or running-hand (see example on Illustration 76, page 126). Both sorts are used, although the hira kana is more common amongst the lower classes. In many books aids are given, and words are from time to time printed side by side in both ways.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCULPTURE IN WOOD AND IVORY.



No. 106.—*Boy with Mask. Netsuké.* (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

GLYPTIC Art in Japan, like so many other branches of our subject with which we have had to do, was born, fostered, and nourished in the service of religion. Ornamentation was an inherent part of the Buddhist creed, its shrines were a mass of decoration from end to end; the necessity for idols and images, in every variety of material, for the use not only of the temple but the home, gave occupation to a large body of artists, who, by an unwritten law, were enlisted from the higher and more educated grades of society.

Mr. W. Anderson has compiled for the introduction to Murray's "Handbook to Japan" a concise account of the Art of Sculpture, which contains all that is at present known to the outside world on the subject. It is with some diffidence that one ventures to question his inference that Japan sculptors fell much below the Indian, Chinese, and Korean models from which they derived their ideas. So far as can be judged from the limited number of examples which, either in their original state or by means of photography, come under the view of

Europeans, the Japanese appears to have divested these prototypes of a southern sensuousness and invested them with dignity, grace, and (where permissible) vitality. In this respect the sculptor acted in marked contrast to his brother who handled the brush only, and who never allowed himself to diverge the breadth of a line from the track which hundreds of his predecessors had so slavishly followed. It is a fair



No. 107.—*Statuette of Ikkiu-osho.* (*C. H. Read Collection.*)

argument that a race of sculptors, which has created such veritable works of glyptic art as netsukés, must have been capable of producing, and must have produced, works of greater merit than the lifeless, effete objects which are the *chef-d'œuvres* of their foreign tutors. It is not perhaps a complete test to ask the reader to decide the question from a comparison of the illustrations in the chapters on Chinese and

Japanese sculpture in the volumes of the "Bibliothèque de l'Enseignement des Beaux-Arts" (Paris: Quantin), but if he does make such a comparison there cannot be a doubt as to which shows the highest standard of excellence.

As we have said, sculpture in Japan originated in the service of religion, and the only examples of any size, until a comparatively modern date, which come under our notice in this country, are those which partake of that character. Principal among these are shrines and figures of deities. Few date back beyond the sixteenth century. To that epoch the lacquered statuette of Ikkiu-osho, a Buddhist priest (Illustration No. 107), belongs; I may cite this as an example showing a nobility of pose and strength of modelling seldom met with in any Chinese or Indian work.

The images of deities are for the most part of the seventeenth century, as in 1614 an edict was issued by Hidétada that every house should contain one, and this must have given a considerable impetus to their creation, for the mere force of example would probably induce the majority of believers to discard their old idol for a new one. Many of the shrine cases, too, in which they are enclosed testify by their metal ornamentation to the hands of the Gotōs, living at that time, having been employed upon them.

This compulsory edict may have been indirectly the cause of the netsuké taking its present shape. In this wise: it was the introduction of tobacco, some time in the sixteenth century, which (as I shall show later on) called it into existence. The edict shortly afterwards also created a numerous body of craftsmen, whose business it was to furnish every family with a carving in miniature of a deified figure. It is probable that these image-makers were not many years in supplying a demand which once met would not be constant, and that within half a century, at the most, their occupation flagged and they had perforce to turn their attention to other outlets. Now, nothing is more likely than they should, perhaps at first in their leisure moments, and afterwards through lack of work, ornament the piece of wood or metal which had hitherto done duty as a netsuké to the tobacco-pouch hanging at their girdle.



No. 108.—*Ivory Inro.* (*Seymour Trower Collection.*)

The Japanese never allows anything with which he has to do to go long unornamented, and therefore it was a matter of course that sooner or later this article should receive attention at the decorator's hands; but the ornamentation would in this case have probably taken the form of a flat pattern, either of a conventional or a floral character. Now, as it happened, the human figure was first taken hold of and adopted, although it could not by any means have been considered the best, as most assuredly it was not the most suitable for the purpose. This suggestion, namely, that it is to the image-maker's lack of employment that we owe the netsuké in its most frequent form, does not appear to have occurred to any of the other writers on the subject, but it receives confirmation from the fact that the first professional maker, Ri-fū-ho, or Hinaya, of Kyōto, who died in 1670, was thirteen years of age when the Images Edict was put in force, and was in his prime when the demand for them probably failed.

There is no section of Japanese Art which succeeds in attracting the attention of everybody who is brought into contact with it, so much as that which is comprised under the heading of netsuké carvings. Enthusiasts have gone so far as to compare them to the Tanagra figures of Greek origin, and to the finest sculptures of the Gothic age. Mr. Jarves has said that "a first-rate netsuké has positively no rivals." This praise is perhaps not too high if we take care to emphasise the word "first-rate." But there is no branch of Japanese Art in which there are so many failures and so few successes. The main reason for this is, that in the case of figures which have to be viewed all round, any fault in modelling is sure to attract attention, and at once militates against the value of the good work, and as we have seen (p. 72), the weakest point in the wide range of Japanese Art is the draughtsmanship of the figure. Whilst therefore success in this respect, if present, is to be highly valued, a lack of it must drag down the estimation in which the whole class is held.

Until very recently a netsuké was a term which included, in the minds of all foreigners, every carving below a certain size, and it is only a comparatively small class who now know the

contrary. In reality a netsuké is a toggle affixed by a cord to the tobacco pouch, or the pipe, or the inro, to prevent it from slipping through the sash or waistband. In early times it probably had little, if any, ornamentation, but gradually, as it was one of the few articles upon a Japanese's dress which admitted of it, ornamentation was added. But so long as it was utilised as a toggle it never lost its original idea, or its form; so that whenever we see a netsuké without compact-



No. 109.—*Okimono: Wood. Blind Shampooer.* (*Author's Collection.*)

ness, or with extraneous excrescences which would catch the folds of the dress, or break off, it may be taken for certain that it is of modern date and has been made for the outside market.

The mark which distinguishes a netsuké from an okimono (or ornament to be placed, see p. 167) is the presence of two small holes, usually in the back, which admit of a cord being strung through them, and the age of a netsuké may often be

gauged by examining the amount to which the inside edges of these holes have been worn by the constant rubbing of the cord. The passage for the cord is sometimes cunningly contrived so as not to be apparent, especially in figures where a leg or arm forms a loop sufficient for the purpose.

Netsukés are made of wood, or lacquered wood, elephant or walrus ivory, boars' tusks or teeth of animals, vegetable ivory, horns of stags, antelopes, and oxen (the latter sometimes compressed), fishbone, walnut or other shells, jade, metal, porcelain, amber, onyx, coral, and crystal. The oldest are those of wood; ivory was only imported in any quantity in the eighteenth century, and it is singular that whilst those made from this material are almost always inferior to those carved from wood, they hold the pride of place in the estimation of the majority of collectors. The wood used, which is generally the core of the cherry-tree, is softer, more subtle, and less liable to splinter than ivory, and whereas the latter usually fails with age, the wood hardens and acquires a patina of a rich warm hue. Ivories are subjected to soaking in coffee and all sorts of mixtures to make them assume an antique appearance.

Mons. Gonse considers that the occupation of a netsuké-maker was the monopoly of a certain class of artisans who followed the trade from generation to generation. But it is almost certain that many of them were men in a higher station of life, many being dentists who first attained their skill with the chisel whilst carving out artificial teeth.

The ancient city of Nara, probably owing to its being a place replete with temples, was for centuries celebrated for its wood-carvers, and it was here that many of the most notable netsuké-makers lived. Osaka was also the head-quarters of a large number, as was Kyōto.

It is impossible to give a list of the most renowned names amongst netsuké-carvers. I have been at the trouble to analyse the lists as given in Gonse, Hart, Murray's Japan, and the catalogue of The Fine Art Society's Exhibition, with the result that of some two hundred and fifty names, not ten per cent. recur in all the lists. That in Murray's Japan is taken from the So-ken Ki-sho, or biography of artists, published in

1781, and I had hoped that from this latter volume much



No. 110.—*Tobacco Case and Pouch with Netsuké. By Shiuzan. (Author's Collection.)*

information might have been obtained, but the result of the

translation of one or two biographies has convinced me that even here but little of a valuable kind is obtainable, although there is much to disquiet those who think that forgeries are only of recent origin.

Those makers whose works are most sought after are, Shiuzan, Miwa, Ikkan, Masanao, Tomotada, Tadatoshi, Demé-Uman, and Demé-Joman, Minko, Tomochika, Kokei.

Shiuzan lived at Nara towards the close of the seventeenth century. Authentic examples of his work are very rare, and very few if any of those which bear his name are genuine. The So-ken Ki-sho contains a number of drawings after his netsukés, and the demon attached to the pouch ornament (Illustration No. 110) is similar to one of them and is stated by experts to be a Shiuzan, but the work has to my mind too finished an appearance, and is in too good a state of preservation for the date assigned to it, although it is certainly an old one; the signature Shiuzan is affixed to a number of brightly coloured figurines which do not pretend to be of ancient date, and also to others from which time has almost erased the traces of colouring in a style which was affected by the master.

The Miwa family came from Yedo. The netsukés of the first maker of this name are held in high esteem and are of great rarity, and it is probably also the case with his netsukés that few of those which pass current as his are actually so. Mons. Gonse can only count with certainty six in Paris. He considers that it is impossible to compress into the space more grandeur of style and knowledge of drawing than is to be found in the works of this master. It is said that Miwa sometimes coloured his netsukés, but of this there is little evidence; his subjects were invariably figures. The spirited and rare okimono of Sho-ki belonging to Mr. Ernest Hart is said to be by Miwa.

There is a class of ivory netsukés about which little is known even by such experts as Mr. Gilbertson. I refer to the tall, archaic, stiff, oddly dressed figures from three to six inches high, invariably of ivory, much worn both as to the noses and any projecting surfaces. None of the old and very few of the modern ones are signed. The former very often



No. 111.—*Sho-ki. Wooden Okimono, lacquered. Seventeenth Century.*
(*Ernest Hart Collection.*)

represent the figure of a Sennin (see p. 44) with a toad on shoulder or head, or else a figure clad in what I believe to be Dutch costume. They have evidently served for something heavier than an inro or pouch, possibly a metal pipe. Mr. Gilbertson considers that from their large size and the material employed they were neither cheap nor common in Japan. They frequently appear in miscellaneous lots, and every collection should contain a representative specimen.

There are certain names which are identified with the portrayal of animals, and many of them have produced works which leave nothing to be desired. Amongst them Ikkan was noted for his rats, Masanao for fowls and rats, Masatami for his rabbits, Tomotada for his oxen, Tadatoshi for snails, and Tamétaka for wild boars. Sōkwa Héi-shiro worked at flowers and grasses in baskets.

Those who excelled in figures were Minkoku, Sensaï and Masanao, and in groups Nobuyuki. As Mr. Anderson has so well expressed: "The designs of the netsuké-carvers embrace the whole range of Japanese motives, and the artist tells his story with the utmost lucidity. Nothing is safe from his humour except, perhaps, the official powers that be, of whom the Japanese citizen has a salutary dread. Religion, history, folk-lore, novels, incidents of daily life, all provide material for his tools, and his subjects are mostly treated in a comic or even flippant vein. The pious Dharma or Daruma (see p. 96), aroused from his nine years' motionless contemplation by the attentions of an obtrusive rat who ventures to nibble the saintly ear, is made to assume an expression suggestive of the strongest equivalent for swearing of which we may suppose a good Buddhist to be capable. The Thunder God (p. 16) is seen extracting the storm-cloud from the basket that gives it stowage-room in idle days of sunshine. An inquisitive bird has unwarily inserted his long beak between the valves of a giant clam whose gaping shell had invited the incautious search after the unknown, and now with straining thighs and flapping wings, struggles vainly to regain his liberty. An expectant domestic party surround a fish-kettle, while the head of the family triumphantly extracts a carp of tempting

proportions, but the averted heads, disgusted faces, and finger-tweaked noses of the hungry group eloquently proclaim the central idea of Buddhism—the impermanency of all things



No. 112.—*Inro: Papiermâché.* (*From the Collection of Mrs. Dobson.*)

and the vanity of human wishes. Such examples might be multiplied without end."

It is this variety of subject which gives so great an interest

to the collection of these *libelots*, and which usually leads to their selection more for the incident they illustrate than for the master who made them. This method of procedure can hardly be found fault with, but an additional interest and value attaches to their possession if they can at the same time be classified under the schools and periods to which they belong.

There is probably no branch of Japanese Art in which the collector should go less astray, and does go more astray, than that which we are now considering. This is, in a measure, due to his declining to follow his own instincts and omitting to study the subject carefully. He declines to trust his own judgment because he sees that others, who, he considers, know more than he does, collect what he would reject; he omits to study the subject because he has no means ready to hand wherewith to do so. At a meeting recently held to discuss the subject of netsukés, this latter reason was put forward with much conclusive argument to account for the failure of discussion which arose. As a speaker said, "We can learn nothing that is worth learning, either from our text-books or our museums." This is perfectly true; the former have still to be written, and when they are, must be compiled in conjunction with native assistance. The latter, if they are to be instructors, must cease to give a *cachet* of value by the exhibition of collections which contain a far larger percentage of forged than of genuine pieces, and which are notable for nothing except their mediocre quality.

Since the opening up of Japan the attention of the netsuké-workers has been diverted to the manufacture of carvings, which are usually extolled by their possessors rather for the magnitude of the piece of ivory from which they have been cut than for the excellence of their workmanship; this estimate of worth is almost always correct. It is seldom that the subject of these has any attraction save its ugliness, and the illustration that we give of a statuette, belonging to Mr. Z. Merton, of a Japanese lady, is an exception which proves the rule. As we have before pointed out, Japanese art is almost invariably remarkable in proportion to its diminutiveness, and the inro (Illustration No. 108) is an example of this.

The netsuké-makers also occupied themselves with the manufacture of toys for the amusement apparently of the Japanese elder folk. These consisted of tiny figures (*hina*) carved in wood, dressed in brocade, and with a rounded bottom weighted with lead which necessitated their retaining their equilibrium. Those in the Illustrations No. 114 and 115 are fair samples, and certainly date from the last century. They came in a collection to Europe and are the only ones I have ever encountered.

The Illustration No. 112 has been introduced here partly in order to show the use of the netsuké, which here takes the form of a Tengu head, and partly to show how European ornament was occasionally introduced into Japanese work. The design is in this instance taken



No. 113.—*Okimono: Ivory.* (*From the Collection of Mr. Z. Merton.*)

from a piece of old leather paper of Dutch origin, which found its way into the possession of the author of the Sō-ken Ki-shō, and was so highly thought of by him that he engraved it in his work; since then it must have been utilised rather frequently, for I have myself seen it on at least half-a-dozen articles in metal, lac, etc.



No. 114.—*Wooden Dressed Figure. Hina. Eighteenth Century.* (*Author's Collection.*)

There are few people who have examined even casually any collection of Japanese wares, be it only in a curio-dealer's window, but must have been struck by the frequent introduction of masks into Japanese Art. Either it is the original masks themselves, or copies of them, or some representation wherein personages old or young are figured as wearing them.

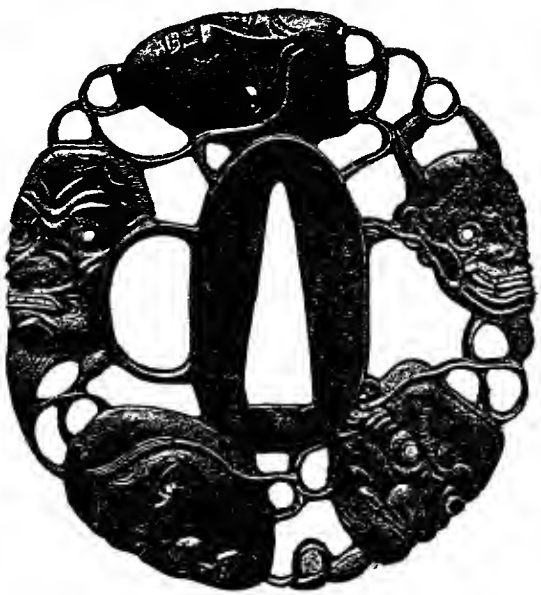
The usage of the mask in the theatre is another of the many features which connect Japan with Greece. The custom arose from the desire to accentuate either the tragic or the comic expression. In Japan, as M. Gonse shows ("L'Art Japonais," p. 170), they can be traced back as far as the ninth century, and he gives an illustration of one which dates from the twelfth. They were at first used for performances called Kagura, which were of a semi-religious character, but in later centuries for theatrical and court usages also, the performances or dances taking the names of Bu-gaku and Nō. They have fallen into desuetude since the seventeenth century. The French have a great fondness for Japanese masks, much more



No. 115.—*Urashima: Wooden Dressed Figure. Eighteenth Century.* (*Author's Collection.*)

so than ourselves, and French artists are wont to adorn their rooms with engravings of them, when they cannot obtain the originals. To us they appear too ghastly and ugly to be fitting subjects for the decoration of the home.

It is a matter of wonder who can be the purchasers of the hideous and weak copies which come over in such numbers. I encountered in a shop-window the other day a series of new ivory masks, of the feeblest kind, which were priced at £80!



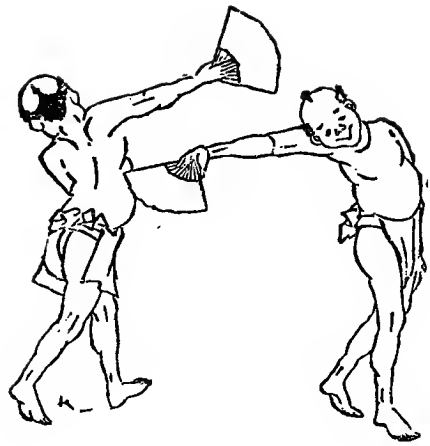
No. 116.—*Tsuba of Masks. Seventeenth Century.* (*Gilbertson Collection.*)

In Hokusai's Man-gwa will be found two plates of masks of the creatures who usually figure in them.

Netsuké collectors will hardly find their collection complete without one or two masks; those which are most sought after are the work of the family of Demé, especially Demé Uman and Demé Joman, who confined themselves to this subject, and attained to such distinction as to receive the title "Lord of Wakasa."

We must not forget whilst treating of ivory work to mention the name of one who introduced into Japan the art of decorating ivory with encrustations of mother-of-pearl, coloured ivory, metal work, coral, etc. Shibayama or Dōshō (the former being his family name) lived at the commencement of the present century, and a good example of his work should find a place in all collections. Care must, however, be taken not to have an example overcharged with ornament, such as those he produced later in life, and which his successors are now issuing in considerable quantities.

Of the netsukés illustrated here, Hadésu (p. 25) is by Shiunkosai, Juro (p. 48) by Kokura, the Treasure Ship (p. 50) by Shohosai, Kiyohimé (p. 54) by Masa-ichi, Sho-ki (p. 56) by Ichichodzu, The Temple-Bell (p. 60) by Choki, The Badger Teakettle (p. 106) by Senroku, The Tanuki (p. 129) by Toyoichi, aud the Boy with Mask (p. 192) by Minko.



CHAPTER XIV.

PORCELAIN AND FAIENCE.

It was stated in the Prologue (page 4) that the wide field of ceramics would be but incidentally mentioned in this volume, for the reason that for a shilling Mr. Franks's handbook to the collection at the South Kensington Museum, wherein it is exhaustively treated, could be purchased. It has, however, been pointed out to me that many persons will think this volume decidedly deficient if so important a phase of Japanese Art is omitted. I have therefore asked the permission of Mr. Ernest Hart to introduce here that portion of his recent lectures upon Japanese Art* which dealt with the subject, for it is the most succinct account which I know of, and has been written by one who is very thoroughly conversant with what he speaks of.

THE OLD JAPANESE PORCELAIN AND FAIENCE.

By the common consent of the students of ceramic art, the Japanese were, and are, the most accomplished and artistic potters that the world has seen. In some departments they

* Lectures on The Historic Arts of Japan, delivered at and published by The Society of Arts. London: 1886.

were excelled as artistic makers by the Chinese, their original masters. The fire and the brilliancy of the vitrified enamels, and the lustrous glazes of the old Chinese porcelain works have never been equalled. The monochrome porcelain of the Ming and Kienlong periods, the ruby, *sang du bœuf*, imperial yellow, crushed strawberry, peach bloom, moonlight blue, camellia green, apple green, and other rare enamel porcelains of old China always have been, and still remain, inimitable. They are as much admired, and even more highly prized, to this day in Japan than even in China or in Europe. Yet, strangely enough, it was to the quality of the porcelain of Japan that its great artistic fame was chiefly due in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The peculiar kind of porcelain known in this country as old Japan ware, and described by Jacquemart as the "chrysanthemo-pæonienne" ware, was imported in great quantities through the Dutch monopolists of Deshima, and formed the delight of patrician buyers for upwards of two hundred years. It was chiefly the product of the province of Hizen, and still forms the basis of the great collections of Dresden, and of many of the great houses and palaces of Europe. It is not to be undervalued. In some of the fine specimens, paste, glaze, colour, and decoration are alike admirable. The passion for it proved a mine of wealth to Dutch traders; but it was at the same time somewhat gaudy and monotonous in decoration. It was always a secondary product, manufactured exclusively to please the European taste, and in European sizes and shapes; the huge vases and *garnitures;* the great bowls, and the long series of plates of this old Japan ware had nothing in common with the Japanese taste, and are of little value now beyond their traditional interest, and the recollection of the part they once played in the decorative and domestic history of Europe. The glory of old Japan in its porcelain were the works of the private kilns of certain of the princes, and the choicest works of the old makers of blue and white and of Kakiyemon and Kenzan, which were little seen in Europe until the last thirty years. The speciality of the Japanese keramists was their faïence and hard stoneware, the Raku

ware, Kutani, Bizen, Oribe, and old Satsuma. Of these highly characteristic specimens of the work of the old Japanese faïence, few specimens were seen in this country till after the downfall of the Tycoons. Happily, Mr. Franks, in this country, early appreciated the importance of studying the artistic pottery of old Japan. The collections at the South Kensington Museum, and those which he has just presented to the nation at the British Museum, are of great value in illustrating this previously almost unknown chapter in keramics; his excellent catalogues will dispense me from the necessity of much detail as to the individual potters and marks. I propose, therefore, only briefly to illustrate to you this interesting subject by a running commentary on the succession of the chief schools and of the great masters whose story has not hitherto been told in this country.

BLUE AND WHITE PORCELAIN.—SHONSUI GORODAYU.

To speak first of porcelain, which has, by a generally accepted European convention, received the first place in the keramic art, I would call your attention to some examples of the blue and white porcelain of Japan, the beauty of which is insufficiently appreciated, inasmuch as we have accustomed ourselves exclusively to admire the blue and white of the old Chinese potters.

The first introduction of the manufacture of porcelain into Japan dates back not earlier than 1530, when one Gorodayu Shonsui, of the province of Ise, travelled to China to learn some of the secrets of the porcelain makers of Foochow, and brought to Arita in Hizen the art of mixing and baking porcelain, and decorating it with blue under the glaze. He brought with him from China the clay, the glaze, and the colour, for at that time the ingredients of porcelain had not been found, nor were the secrets of compounding it known in Japan. Thus he was limited both in his methods and the amount of his product, but he showed considerable skill, and has an enduring fame as the father of Japanese porcelain. He made only blue and white porcelain under glaze, and his works were mostly small

in size. Two pupils of Gorodayu carried on his tradition, Gorohachi and Goroshichi, but for want of material the fabric languished, and its reputation declined until about 1608, when Risampei, the Korean potter, was brought by Nabeshima Naoshime, the ancestor of Prince Nabeshima, one of the Japanese generals of the Taiko, to Arita; he found, on the slopes of the mountain, the feldspathic material which was needed for the production of porcelain. For forty years blue and white porcelain continued to be made here, but the Japanese keramist did not acquire the art of using vitrifiable enamels, which required the second firing over the glaze at a low temperature—the secret of the Chinese coloured enamel porcelain vases. His authentic work is excessively rare, my collection contains one specimen and I know of none other in Europe.

PORCELAIN DECORATED OVER THE GLAZE. TOKUZAYEMON AND KAKIYEMON.

This was first introduced into Japan by a certain Tokuzayemon about 1647, who learnt the Chinese art. He, however, was not himself a skilful potter or artist, and it was his great contemporary, Kakiyemon, who having, it is said, acquired the secrets of Tokuzayemon, freed himself from the fetters of Chinese traditions, and produced porcelain decorated with designs in coloured enamel which created a new epoch in porcelain. Kakiyemon attained at once to a degree of perfection in the manner of decoration and perfection of porcelain, which has never been surpassed. His porcelain has a fine white hard base, which rings with clear bell-like sound. In the most beautiful specimens of his work the milk-white glaze is sparsely decorated with finely drawn designs of the bamboo and the plum blossom. Sometimes his ware is decorated here and there with corn sheaves and flowers, and sometimes also with fluttering birds. The colouring of his enamels is characteristic; generally it is in dull red, pale apple green, and lilac blue. A basin in my collection will be recognised as having been the parent of the famous ware of Dresden, of Chantilly, and of Chelsea—all of which factories,

at a later date, so closely imitated the white porcelain and the decoration of Kakiyemon that, for many years, specimens of his handiwork being unfamiliar in Europe, it was difficult to distinguish the originals from the copies. Kakiyemon worked also in faïence and terra cotta.

THE PORCELAIN OF KAMEYAMA, HIRADO, AND NABESHIMA.

Making of blue and white porcelain, decorated under glaze at a single firing, continued to flourish at Imari, and some specimens in my collection rival in depth of transparency and in graduation of translucent cobalt blue, the fine work of the Chinese artists so much valued in their hawthorn pots. The artists of Kameyama and of Hirado also produced in the eighteenth century a blue and white of exquisite beauty; especially notable is the blue and white porcelain of Hirado ware. A private factory was established in 1740 by Matsura, a prince of Hirado, who watched over the products of his factory, and reserved them for presents to the Tokugawa princes and his private friends. This factory was established at Mikawa-uchi, hence was often called Mikawa-uchi ware. The porcelain was never in commerce, and is therefore excessively rare; in Europe it is justly highly prized. Captain Brinkley calls attention to the extreme delicacy of the body of the paste, which he states was finely powdered, strained and purified, while the glazes were prepared with long and most minute care. The blue is pure and soft, different altogether from the intense cobalt of old Chinese ware. The delicacy of the drawing and perfection of the firing are not excelled, and by many considered to be unapproached, by any porcelain over all Japan or China. The white porcelain animals, birds, and figures of Hirado, and the sprays of flowers, all of this period, are of extreme beauty and value, representing the direct progenitors of the products of old Dresden. Hirado ware is still produced, but it is now of a purely commercial character. The pieces are finely decorated, and have excellent qualities, but they are wanting in delicacy of paste, in the beauty of the milk-white glaze. In the old ware, you will notice that several are

engraved in the biscuit under the glaze, and that in delicate modelling and all artistic qualities, they are unsurpassable by any Chinese or European originals, while in general taste and freedom of design they are far superior to the old Chinese work.

KUTANI PORCELAIN.

Another famous school of porcelain is the variety known as the Kutani ware. Porcelain of Kutani was made at the village of Kutani, in the province of Kaga. It was commenced by Gotō Saijiro, who was an artist in pottery and excelled in figures, whom Prince Mayeda sent in 1658 to Arita (Hizen) to study the production of porcelain. Saijiro, on his return, made only small pieces with the material which he brought from Hizen. The objects of this period are pure porcelain, decorated in red, green, yellow, violet, gold and silver. By subsequent experiments he discovered near the village of Kutani a clay which supplied the elements of success to the local factory. This discovery enabled the pupils of Saijiro to produce more important works. These artisans had not, however, the artistic skill to produce finely-decorated pieces. Kudzumi Morikage, the eminent pupil of Tanyu, came to Kaga towards the end of the seventeenth century, and gave the aid of his brush. He introduced freedom of design in the Kaga porcelain, and treated a great variety of subjects, as well as the Karako, or Chinese. These specimens of Morikage's work are highly appreciated. They are in peculiar tones of green, violet and yellow, and rarely red. This is the Ao-Kutani, or green Kutani. These were pure porcelain. Later in the eighteenth century the material degenerated, and the Kutani of this period is almost a failure, and the earthy base is very dark, almost black.

Later, Kutani entered on another period. In 1814 a certain Yoshidaya re-discovered in a Chinese work the technique of porcelain, and learnt the art of decoration with red, which Saijiro had introduced a hundred years before, but which had been lost. He made, once more, red porcelain decorated with gold, which was known as Hachiro-ye, or designs of Hachiro,

the name of the designer who decorated these objects. In 1878, Yeiraku Zingoro, of Kioto, came to Kutani, and began to make red porcelain brilliantly decorated with gold. The gold of Yeiraku was applied in leaf, and is very brilliant, and its red very clear; that of the previous period is darker, and the gold is applied in powder. Yeiraku's mark is now much imitated and applied to inferior work.

PORCELAIN OF OWARI, OR SETO PORCELAIN.

Seto, in the province of Owari, which produced so long pottery and porcelain, that it came to be known as Seto-mono, did not begin to produce porcelain till 1801, when a potter named Kato-Tamekichi, who had been to Arita, after four years' study, returned to Seto and discovered porcelain earth. These are now the potteries which are the great sources of modern Japanese porcelain, and which are full of commercial activity. Its products have never been really artistic, although the workers were admirable artisans.

PORCELAIN OF KIYOMIZU (A SUBURB OF KIOTO).

Unlike Owari, the Kiyomizu-yaki is an artistic ware. According to Mr. Kurokawa Mayori, author of the chapter on porcelain in the work called "Kogé Shirio," published by the Museum of Tokio in the year 1868, Ninsei himself made porcelain at Kioto, in the seventeenth century, and later this branch of keramics was continued by Otobaya-Kurobé (1751 to 1763). However, the blue and white porcelain, called Sometsuké by the Japanese, was commenced at Kiyomizu, between 1804—17, by Takahashi Dôhachi, Wangé, Kité, Midzukoshi-Yoché. It is after the style of the porcelain of Hizen. These are highly artistic, but are not rare; and they are what are usually known as the Kiyomizu-yaki. The signs by which it may be recognised are the relative coarseness of its paste, and the relative blackness of the thicker parts of its blue decoration. Although Yeiraku made porcelain at Kiyomizu, it is known, not as Kiyomizu-yaki, but by his name, and is distinguished by his special red and gold decoration.

There are other kinds of porcelain, such as porcelain of Inno, Tozan, Nakano, etc., which are objects of collection, but which have not the same importance as schools and varieties as those of which I have spoken.

But I must pass to faïence, into which the Japanese threw all their genius as artists, potters, and decorators, and in which they knew how to produce subtle and surprising effects, delicate gradations of colour, and quaint forms, which give to Japanese pottery a unique place in the history of keramics.

JAPANESE POTTERY AND FAIENCE.

The Japanese passion for art pottery dates back to the influence of Giyogi and his successors in the ninth century. Japanese amateurs have for centuries cherished the richly-glazed celadon known as Seiji, copied from and rivalling Chinese originals; and in the twelfth century Toshiro, a potter, of Seto, in the province of Owari, had brought back from his travels in China some of the famous little enamelled faïence tea powder jars and bowls which excited the enthusiasm of the Japanese, and became objects of a singular and almost idolatrous veneration by the Japanese nobles of successive generations. The old tea ceremony, with its slow and ceremonious customs, and its political and social influence, has already been described (p. 81). Amongst the specimens of ancient tea jars and tea bowls which I possess is one of the fifteenth century, bearing the description of Daibutsu-Hotoji, which has the traditional fame as a cup of Taiko-Sama, and was sent to Europe with a string of unneeded certificates. It is a typical specimen of the somewhat rustic but subtly coloured enamels which pleased the Japanese taste, and which were traditional with this kind of ware. In other specimens one can recognise the richness and depth of the glaze, and the subtle play of colours, but a smile will probably ensue when one hears that jars, similar to that illustrated at page 84, were esteemed such choice morsels of pottery in Japan as to form the choicest gifts of a prince and the most treasured possessions of a daimio;

that they have been the cause of wars, vendettas, and suicides; and have been sold for many times their weight in gold—sometimes as much as £500 was given for a single specimen of great traditional fame. They come to Europe clothed in rich brocades, and enclosed even in more than one rich lacquer box. They have not for us the special historical attraction or peculiar grounds of veneration which they had for the old Japanese, but they are interesting as examples of an early and somewhat superstitious taste and of political and social fashions, rather than as specimens in themselves of any supreme beauty. There are many other varieties of Japanese pottery: for example, the early Shigaraki ware, singularly rough, but showing no small skill in potting, and a certain primitive beauty in glaze; the Soma ware with its impressed horse, the heraldic emblem of the Prince of Soma; the Takatori ware with its lustrous glaze, of which I have a Hotei which is a fine specimen; the old Banko and Higo wares, the incised Yatsushiro, and the Kinko-zan ware, with its rich raised blue enamels; Toyosuké in characteristic brown and white reliefs; the brilliantly coloured Oribe with flashes of mottle glaze, and the fine old Imbe or Bizen ware, with its rich reddish-brown salt glaze, one of the oldest of Japanese wares, dating back at least from 400 to 500 years. Of the blue and white Bizen ware I have also some rare examples; but time would fail me even to speak in outline of the history of these ancient art potteries and their founders, I must refer you to my printed catalogue, to the works which I have already mentioned by Mr. Franks, to the chapter on pottery and porcelain in M. Gonse, and especially to the long forthcoming work on Japanese porcelain and pottery by Captain Brinkley. This promises to be by far the most complete and valuable work on the subject, and will be necessary to every student and collector. I have time only to dwell upon three great varieties of faïence, which are the masterpieces of Japanese keramic art, viz, Ninsei ware, Kenzan ware, and Satsuma ware. After Kakiyemon, Ninsei and Kenzan are the two great dominant names in the history of Japanese pottery.

THE WORKS AND INFLUENCE OF NINSEI.

Ninsei flourished from 1624 to the middle of that century. He was a contemporary of Kakiyemon, and belongs, therefore, to the golden age of Japanese decorative art. He was an artist first, and next a potter. He acquired the secrets which Tokuzayemon had a few years previously imported into Hizen of the Chinese art of working with enamels over glaze, a secret which, under the strictest penalties, Hirado factories vainly endeavoured to keep to themselves. Ninsei at once applied this art to the faïence of Kioto in 1653. He dealt with it in thoroughly Japanese taste, and showed an original genius in decoration. The products of Ninsei were the type of what is now commonly known as the buff or cream-coloured wares of Awata. This ware, which he made at Omuro, Kioto, is of hard paste, and has a very fine and uniform crackle like the roe of a fish; it is enamelled on a buff ground with floral designs in blue and green tints heightened with gold. This brilliant enamelled faïence, of which the authentic specimens bear his impressed seal, laid the foundation of a new national school of faïence which spread extensively and has been ever since continued. Soon Kioto was filled with kilns, which emulated the products and imitated the style of Ninsei. The authentic old ware of Ninsei, of which I show you a series of specimens, is followed only at a distance by his successors, and most of the modern Awata ware utterly fails in glaze, crackle, and perfection of enamels, even to resemble the works of the master whom it imitates. His most famous follower was Kinko-zan, who, in the next generation and in the early part of the eighteenth century, brought to great perfection the Awata ware—a ware resembling that of Ninsei, and enamelled with similar colours, but especially with a deep purple enamel raised in relief. The old work of Kinko-zan may be recognised by the fineness and uniformity of the crackle, and the clearness and finish of the enamel designs. The modern Awata imitations of Ninsei and Kinko-zan are thin, cold, and dry in glaze, and the enamels are less carefully and perfectly applied. I am sorry to see the names of Kinko-zan and of Ninsei impressed

and painted in gold on many obviously inferior modern specimens which have lately come under my notice. This system of forging old names upon worthless modern pieces is much to be deplored, and adds greatly to the difficulties of collection.

KENZAN, HIS WORK AND INFLUENCE.

Next to Ninsei in time, but not less in fame or genius, or in the great influence which he exercised on Japanese faïence, was Kenzan, brother of the celebrated Ogata Korin, who lived from 1663 to 1743. He was a painter of the supremely impressionist style. In moments of relaxation he was also a lacquerer, as you have seen. As a potter he was supreme, and introduced into the decoration of pottery a new and highly original style of decoration of surfaces, with free-hand impressionist drawings of birds, flowers, grasses, and delicately suggested landscapes in coloured enamels. His style not only created a new school in the pottery of his country, but still influences in the highest degree all our modern European decorated porcelain. Until the time of Kenzan, this freely-sketched floral decoration was unknown on porcelain or china. In looking at Kenzan ware perhaps your first impression will be to say at once, Yes, but this is in many respects like what we see now on modern china, and there is nothing original about it. That is the observation often made. It is just the same naïve tribute to his genius which is sometimes paid by the uneducated visitor to a representation of one of Shakespeare's plays, when he says, All this cannot be new, I have heard so many of these lines before. Kenzan's delicately pencilled flowers, lightly touched landscapes, his tufts of grass, this view of Fusiyama, displayed as through a mist, strike you as old familiar friends in the decoration of porcelain, because the genius of Kenzan gave the cue to all the potters of Japan, and subsequently to all keramic decorators of the world, when they became acquainted with the products of his genius. These are the originals from which our modern school of decoration chiefly spring. I recommend them to

your study, for they are as thoroughly accordant with modern taste as with the Oriental notions of the primitive Japanese. Kenzan was a poet also, and he often wrote his verses with his own hand on his landscapes, as you see in some of the specimens. All his pieces are signed with his bold monogram. I am sorry to say that even that has lately been imitated by an accomplished modern potter, Tanzan, who, however, I believe had no intention of deceiving when he did so, but intended it as homage to the old master; of which, however, unfair advantage is sometimes taken in passing off the pieces as if they were the original pieces of Kenzan. Kenzan passed a great part of his life at Kioto; later he went to Yedo, where he made pottery of softer paste. His pieces belong to two periods, Kenzan ware of Imado, and Kenzan ware of Kioto. The paste of his Kioto ware is often inferior, but its decoration is admirable. There is about the work of Kenzan a certain archaism and a masterly roughness and boldness which sometimes shock the modern eye. They must be looked at as the products of an impressionist artist of the seventeenth century, and belonging to an Oriental who preferred a suggestive to an imitative art. They are among the rarest and most precious products of the great school of Japanese pottery, and as such I have set myself the task of collecting as many authentic pieces as possible, and for that purpose have secured a considerable number of authentic pieces, such as can never again be brought together.

THE OLD SATSUMA FAIENCE.

Finally, I must speak to you of Satsuma faïence of Japan, and it is that of which some bastard varieties produced in modern times have a most extended popularity. Undoubtedly the old Satsuma ware, of a particular period, viz., the end of the last century, was the most aristocratic, the most delicately decorated, and the most perfect, in its technical qualities, of any faïence which Japan has produced, and it has an artistic as well as historic interest. But there are many fallacies current concerning Satsuma ware and the hard facts do not

at all harmonize with the ordinary popular opinion. The beginnings of the Satsuma factory date back to 1600, when the Daimio Shimazu Yoshihiro, on his return in 1600 from the Korea, brought back some Korean potters and established them at Satsuma. The ware of this period, however, was of a quite archaic character, and chiefly in a grey glaze on hard pipe-clay base. I have an authentic specimen of it with characteristically simple archaic decoration scratched into the base beneath a grey glaze. It has a great historic interest from its rarity and its place in the history of the Satsuma factory, but I do not expect you would admire its inartistic character. There is a tradition firmly rooted, and which I believe to be well founded, that in 1670 coloured enamel faïence of a more decorative character was produced in small quantities at the private factory of the prince by Tangen, the pupil of the famous Tanyu, who was sent for to Satsuma to decorate some pieces for the prince. This Satsuma-Tangen ware is especially described lately by Captain Brinkley as being among the rarest treasures of the collections of Japan. No other specimen is known in Europe than a flat yellow bottle in my collection. Unlike any other specimens of Satsuma ware, it is decorated with figures painted in brown and of the Kano school. The enamel decoration at the upper and lower edge and the character of the paste are quite decisive of its origin. But for a careful examination of the paste and of this enamel border, you would not recognise it as of Satsuma ware. This, then, must be considered a unique specimen of the Satsuma-Tangen ware, which is of the utmost rarity even in Japan. In the seventeenth century the kilns of Satsuma were little employed and lost their fame; but about the year 1700 the Prince Yeio restored the fabric by employing Kin and Kuwabara, who created the peculiar hard close-grained ware, with the cream-coloured finely crackled glaze, and with a paste as dense as ivory; with limited decoration in enamelled diaper and conventional flowers and dragons. This is the type which established the unrivalled reputation of Satsuma for the speciality of its faïence; but it was only about the year 1765, or, as some

people say, 1785, that this perfected and characteristic variety of Satsuma ware which we know was produced under the patronage of Shimadsu Nawonobu by an artist named Honda Yenosuke, and it is to this period that belongs the finest ware. This old Satsuma was never in the market, and was unprocurable in Europe until quite lately. It was made only for the prince, for his friends, and for gifts to the Court. You may judge of the perfection by its close-grained ivory base, its delicate crackle, its hard, sharp modelling, its perfectly brilliant and delicately coloured enamels, its gilding, which is like jeweller's work. If you compare it with the masses of modern Satsuma ware, decorated at Kioto nowadays for the European market with designs of saints, deities, warriors, highly gilded and often surcharged with ornament, you will be able to distinguish between the rare original products of the princely factory and the masses of modern Kioto, so-called Satsuma, with which the market is now flooded: some so rare that you will hardly recognise them as Satsuma until you examine the paste of this old monochrome, greenish-black Satsuma vase and of the *flambe* Satsuma vase. I would recommend you to study closely specimens of genuine old Satsuma to note the extreme solidity of the ware, its restrained and graceful decoration, its ivory-like surface, the sharp cutting hardness of its edges, the perfection of its gilding, and the unfailing accuracy of outline of its enamels, their brilliant yet delicate colour, because there is nothing as to which so many delusions prevail as to what is called old Satsuma. There are few collections, however small, which do not boast something which is called old Satsuma. From my experience of many great collections, I am compelled to say that I do not know of a dozen specimens in this country; and, indeed, while there is nothing so abundant as highly-decorated modern pieces of Satsuma, there is nothing so rare as fine and authentic specimens of the real old ware. There are no marks by which Satsuma may be known except the study of its paste, its crackle, its enamels, and its gilding, and to distinguish between the new and the old would seem, from the numerous deceptions from which I

have known both dealers and collectors to suffer, to be one of the most difficult arts for the Japanese collector to acquire. I believe, however, if you will for half an hour carefully compare authentic old specimens with any modern specimens which you choose to put alongside of them, you will be able to master that art.

CHAPTER XV.

XYLOGRAPHY.—ENGRAVED PRINTS AND BOOKS.

THE branch of Art which is known under the above name is so important a one in connection with Japanese Art that a volume might well be devoted to it, and the subject can hardly be treated of at all in a small compass. But illustrations, coloured and otherwise, come over here in such profusion, and are obtainable at such small cost, and consequently are so widely distributed, that a rapid glance at the history of the Art which has produced them of necessity comes within the scope of this work.

It is to Mr. Anderson that Englishmen must as usual turn if they wish for accurate information on the subject. His "Pictorial Arts of Japan" and his catalogue of Japanese paintings in the British Museum, will be found to be the completest guides extant. Very lately he, with a vast amount of trouble, catalogued and arranged at the Burlington Fine Art Club an exhibition of prints and books* illustrating the history of engraving in Japan, but it was open a cruelly short time and but few knew of its existence until it had closed. As the catalogue is not obtainable by the public I have taken the liberty of culling from it much of my information.

* Mons. Bing, Mr. Anderson, Mons. Gonse and Mons. Duret have probably the largest collection of engravings in the world. The former is rapidly spreading a knowledge of Japanese chromo-xylography through his magazine, *Artistic Japan*.

Japan has learnt from China almost all she knows of the art of graving on wood. Not only has she adopted the style but the actual method of workmanship.



No. 117.—*Kanaoka, a Portrait Painter.* (*From "L'Art Japonais."*)

The place of honour amongst Japanese amateurs and collectors is always held by Chinese wares and whether it be paint-

ings, books, porcelain or bronzes, the preference is given to these over the products of their own country. Chinese books have always had free course in Japan and every workman can obtain them. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Japanese Art is redolent of Chinese types, heroes, animals, history, and legend thinly veiled in Japanese clothing; until the close of the seventeenth century there was little, if any, art of an independent character.

The Japanese painter still holds his brush exactly as did his Chinese prototype two thousand years ago. He works with a soft brush held as far as possible from the point and with the hand raised from the paper.

The processes which characterized the works a thousand years ago have descended unaltered (with the exception hereafter to be noted) to the present day—that rapid sweep of the brush full of colour by which the stem and foliage of the bamboo is to European eyes so wonderfully translated; the system of outlining the folds of a dress in a variety of eccentric ways; the method of perspective which makes all landscapes look as if they had been painted from an elevation, the mountains towering up behind one another; the avoidance of difficulties by the introduction of clouds in all sorts of incongruous places—all these are of Chinese origin.

The Chinese, as most people know, exercised the art of printing centuries before it was known in Europe, and this applies also to illustrations by means of block printing. When the Japanese adopted it from them is not certain, but engravings are extant which date from the thirteenth century. It does not come within my province to discuss these and I shall, therefore, at once ask my reader to pass over the gap between this period and the seventeenth century, for the good reason that no examples earlier than that date are likely to come into his possession.

It may be well before proceeding to treat of the creators of book illustration, to say something of what was illustrated, and how it was done.

Xylography was first employed in the service of religion for reproducing texts and images. This was followed by the pro-

duction of publications such as romances and novels in which the illustrations were about on a par with those in our English



No. 118.—*Hiratoka painting Hades. By Yosäi.* (*From* "*L'Art Japonais.*")

Chap books before the commencement of the era which came in with Bewick. These were followed by single sheet prints (ichi-mai-yé) and by that large class of productions which emanated

from the theatre as advertisements and portraits of favourite actors, scenes, and plays.

Chromo-xylography originated in Japan at the commencement of the last century with "single sheets" printed from three blocks, black, pale green or blue, and pale pink. The designs of Torii Kiyonobu, Kiyomasu, and Okumura Masanobu were executed in these tints.

Nishimura Shigénaga added a fourth block in 1720, and two others were added about forty years later. Mr. Anderson considers that the art was brought to perfection between 1765 and 1785 in the single sheet pictures of Torii Kiyonaga, Suzuki Harunobu, and Katsugawa Shunsho, and maintained for a further twenty-five years under the Utagawas—Toyohara, Toyohiro and Toyokuni, etc.

Mr. Anderson thus describes the technique :—

"The picture, drawn for the engraver upon thin translucent paper of a particular kind, is pasted face downwards upon a block of wood, usually cherry—sawn in the direction of the grain, instead of across it, as in Europe—and the superfluous thickness of paper is removed by a process of scraping until the design is clearly visible ; the borders of the outline are then incised—very lightly in the more delicate parts—with a kind of knife, and the interspaces between the lines of the drawing are finally excavated by means of tools of various shapes. The ink is applied with a brush, and the printing is effected by hand pressure (assisted by a kind of pad), to which procedure may be attributed much of the beauty of the result. Certain gradations of tone, and even polychromatic effects, may be produced from a single block by suitable application of ink or colour upon the wood ; and on looking at these examples, it is often apparent that a great deal of artistic feeling had been exercised in the execution of the picture after the designer and engraver had finished their portion of the work. Uninked blocks for the purpose of embossing portions of the design, as an aid to the effects of colour-printing, were certainly used about 1730, and perhaps at an earlier date."

"The effect of printing from two or more blocks was in some

cases obtained by preparing a single block with ink of different colours, or with different shades of the same colour. This appeared as early as 1740 in some landscapes in the 'Gwako Senran,' where the distance is represented by pale ink, against which the dark foreground stands out in bold relief, and in the Sōshisoki gwafu (1769—70) chromatic effects are produced by the same means. Sky and water tones are in like manner graduated in colour prints, the superfluity of colour where the lighter shade is required being removed by the simple process of wiping the inked block with a cloth, according to directions previously given to the engraver."

"In the ordinary colour prints the effects are obtained by the use of a number of additional blocks engraved in series from copies of the outline impression taken from the first or outline block. The correctness of register is secured by preserving two angles of the original block level with the surface of the lines of the engraving, and marking each of these with incisions in a certain direction. The angles are printed off upon the sheet bearing the first outline, and are repeated in fac-simile in the cutting of all the subsequent blocks, the corner marks left upon the paper after contact with block No. 1 thus being made to serve as an exact guide for the accurate apposition of the sheet upon each successive block. The printings are all effected by hand pressure. The process is simple, but the rarity of faults of register in Japanese chromo-xylography proves that it is efficacious."

Mr. Anderson has divided the era of xylography into six periods, and the following are the artists who were notable during each of them, the names of the most distinguished being printed in capital letters. The styles which each principally exercised are appended to their names. The first and second periods may be passed over, the work produced being archaic in character, and the producer's names unknown.

3RD. PERIOD. 1680—1710. Initiated all the styles of wood engraving. HISHIGAWA MORONOBU, founder. Fine examples rare. Technically excellent. Master of colours.

Okamura Masanobu } delineators of women.
Miyagawa Chōshun }

Hasegawa Tōün.
Ishikawa Riusen.
Torii Kiyonobu. Founder of Torii family, which first used chromo-xylography and introduced theatrical sheets and books.

4th Period. 1710—1765.

Tachibana Morikuni (1670—1746). Designs for artisan artists still in use.
Nishigawa Sukénobu (1671—1760). Prolific artist. Excelled in every branch, especially women.
Tsukioka Tangéi (1717—1786). Heroic deeds. Scenery.
Ōöka Shunboku (1676—1760). Copies of old masters still used by artisans.
Torii family: Kiyomitsu, Nishimura } single-sheet chromo-xylo-
Shigénaga, and Ishikawa Toyonobu } graphs.

5th Period. 1765—1820. Palmy age of chromo-xylography. Printings increased to six, gradations added. New features; topographical handbooks, albums of miscellaneous sketches, *e.g.*, Man-gwa, and many volume novels.

Torii Kiyonaga (—1765). Women and novelettes.
Fi-otsuné.
Kiyominé.
Katsugawa Shunshō. Theatrical portraiture; women.
Shunkō, Shunjō, and Shunyei, pupils of Shunshō. Theatrical portraiture.
Toriyama Sékiyen. Book illustrator.
Ippitsusai Bunchō
Suzuki Harunobu
Isoda Shōbei or Koriūsai } delineators of women.
Koyékawa Shunchō
Kitawo Kosuisai Shigémasa
Utagawa Toyoharu, and pupils Toyohiro and Toyokuni (1772—1828). Theatrical portraiture, female celebrities and novels.
Hosoda Yeishi.
Kitawo Masanobu.
Kubo Shunman.
Kitawo Keisai Masayoshi. Inventor of sketches of figures in one or two strokes.
Kikugawa Yeisan.
Hosoï Chōbunsai.
Kitaogawa Utamaro.
Hokusai.
Kunisada, Kuniyasu. Pupils of Toyokuni.
Takéhara Nobushioé, or Shunchōsai. Topography.

Yanagawa Shigénobu, Giokuransai Sadahidé, Keisai Yeisen } novels.

6TH PERIOD. 1825—1860. Decline.

HOKUSAI.

Utagawa Kunisàda. Pupil of Toyokuni. Single sheet and theatricals. Pupils' work marked by yellow.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi. Best work single sheet.

ICHIRIUSAI HIROSHIGÉ. Topography (pupil of Toyohiro).

HASEGAWA SETTAN. Topography; rival of Hiroshigé.

Haségawa Settei, son of Settan.

Matsukawa Hanzan. Topography.

Hokuchō, Hokuyei, Hokushiu, Sadamasu, Shigéharu } Pupils of Utagawa school at Osaka.

KIKUCHI YŌSAI. Portraits of ancient worthies.

RECENT PERIOD. Revival.

Bairai. Birds and flowers.

Sensai Yeitoku. Fairy tales and artisan's designs.

Kawanabé Kiōsai. Comic.

Many of the artists named in the foregoing lists would, if space permitted, be worthy of a more extended notice. Concerning this, however, I must again refer those who seek for information to Mr. Anderson's "Pictorial Arts" and "British Museum Catalogue."

The name of Hokusaï cannot, however, be passed by. Without the results of his facile brush, how should we have given any idea of life in Japan as it existed before the advent of modern ideas? Without his influence in shaking the foundations of tradition, how would that fatal incumbrance to the progress of Japanese Art have been overthrown?

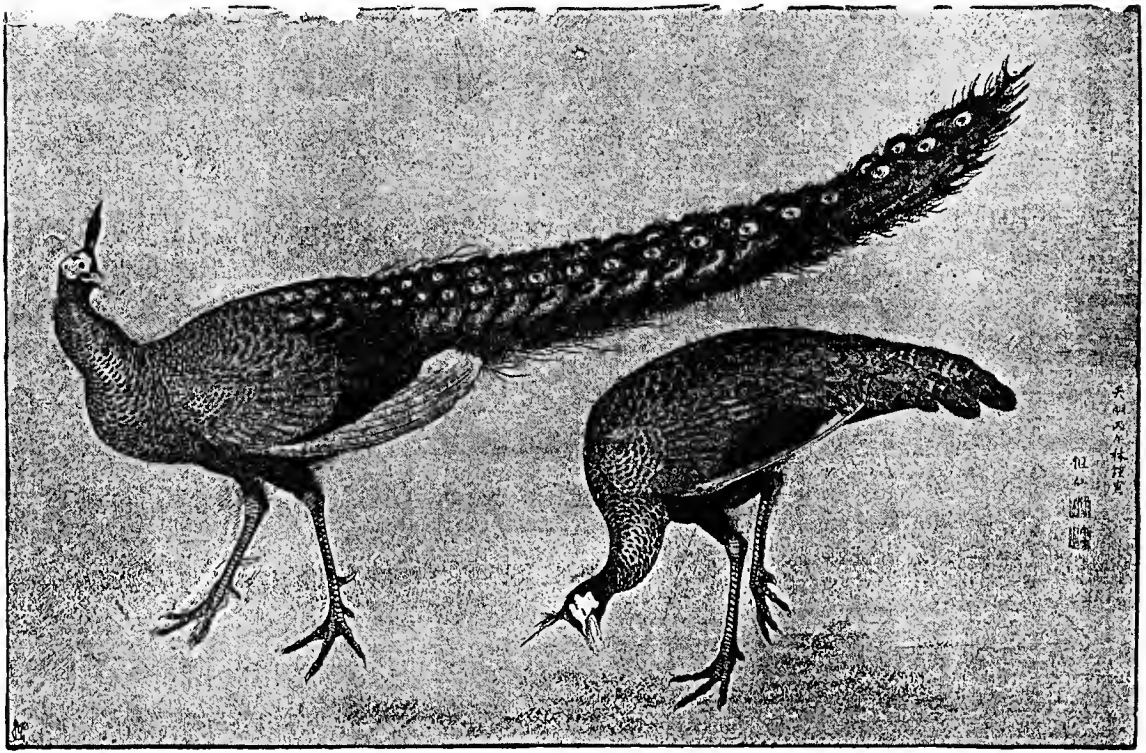
Like all reformers, his admirers, especially those out of his own country, have placed him on a pedestal with, as companions, Rembrandt, Ghirlandajo, and Botticelli! This laudation is not shared in the artist's own country even now, and was not at all the case during the greater part of Hokusaï's life. Little was known of him until the beginning of this century, except that he was the son of a mirror maker, born in 1760 at Yedo, his master being Katsukawa Shunshō. When well on in life

he opened a school for industrial workmen, and for them he published in 1812 the first volume of his celebrated Man-gwa.



No. 119.—*Kojima* (*see p.* 28), *after Hokusai.* (*From* "*L'Art Japonais.*")

This was sold very cheaply and the artist rapidly achieved distinction amongst his own class. New volumes were quickly



No. 120.—*From a Painting by Sosen, in the Dillon Collection*, 1786. (*From Anderson's "Pictorial Arts of Japan."*)

demanded, and from this time until his death in 1849 he worked incessantly for the publishers. As he modestly stated, "he had indeed worked diligently from his sixth to his eighty-eighth year." A list of publications which contain his illustrations will be found at page 357 of the British Museum Catalogue, where his proper position in the realm of Art is thoroughly discussed and assigned. Some of his works are very rare, especially original drawings; very clever forgeries of these latter by contemporary pupils frequently come to hand, but the majority of the master's work has perished, for it was only drawn on thin paper to be fastened on the block and destroyed in the process of engraving. Mr. Ernest Hart has a series of forty-six drawings which were drawn in this method but never served their intended purpose. Our frontispiece shows the great master as it is stated in the preface to the "Man-gwa" "handing down to future ages and bringing within the knowledge of our remote fellow-men beyond a thousand leagues, the spirit and form of all the joy and happiness we see filling the universe."



CHAPTER XVI.

THE STUDY OF JAPANESE ART.—CONTENTS OF OUR MUSEUMS.—THE FUTURE OF JAPANESE ART.



WE have now arrived at the close of our survey of Japan and its Art, but it may not be out of place to add in conclusion a few words upon the subjects which head this chapter.

Those who have read this book will hardly need to be told that Japanese Art requires to be studied. It is, however, necessary to emphasise this, for the interest and beauty contained in it do not always lie upon the surface. Every piece gains in interest by its connection with its fellow, whether its subject, its material, or the treatment of one or both be studied. If it is possible, the study should be commenced under the tutelage of an intelligent collector, for an hour with such a one will change a languid liking into an ardent appreciation.*

* I especially advise this in the case of those who intend to acquire as well as to study.

Unfortunately the means of learning do not exist here as they do in Germany, by means of an Oriental College (see *post*, p. 241), and so the majority must turn to our British and South Kensington Museums to satisfy their needs.

The following brief survey shows the extent to which these institutions do so.

Lacquer.—This manufacture, which is more essentially Japanese than any other, though perhaps not the most suitable to a museum collection from the Industrial Art point of view, is hardly represented at all in either Museum. The pieces at South Kensington are almost without exception modern, and there is, I believe, only a single inro; there are some specimens of the various kind of lacquer, similar to but not so instructive as those at Kew (see p. 152). The British Museum has only a few isolated pieces of lacquer.

Metal-work.—There is a considerable collection of the least interesting phases of this at South Kensington, but with the exception of the Miochin eagle and one or two other large pieces, it is almost entirely confined to metal okimono, the majority of them of uninteresting and ugly types. Many of the so-called Japanese bronzes are Chinese, and many of them are wrongly labelled. As regards swords and sword furniture the Museum is miserably furnished; no fine swords, very few guards worthy of the collection, a few second-rate kodzukas, no fuchi-kashiras or any of smaller pieces; no specimens of mokumé, in fact no fitting representation of any section of the metal-work which should be of such interest and profit to our metal-workers. At the British Museum there are a few good swords. There is also a small collection of bronzes, and samples of patinas at the Geological Museum in Jermyn Street.

Ceramics.—Both Museums have a practically complete collection, South Kensington having effected a most judicious purchase of the collection exhibited by the Japanese Government at the Philadelphia Exhibition, and one, of perhaps greater value, having been presented to the British Museum by Mr. Franks, whose munificence in this and other ways has quite recently been tardily recognised by the Government.

Paintings and Engravings.—The British Museum has, by the

acquisition of the Anderson Collection, made it unnecessary for any addition to this department. Numbering as it does some thousands there should be material for ample distribution to provincial museums if required. South Kensington possesses a quantity of engravings, but they are not yet catalogued.

Sculpture in Wood and Ivory.—At the British Museum there is a collection of shrines and idols, but neither Museum, so far as I know, possesses a single netsuké. Modern ivory-work which can be reproduced at will is represented by some garish screens at South Kensington, and much of the carved tusk work which is to be found in every shop. A screen which has little Art merit, figures in the accounts for last year as having been purchased for £150! a sum which would have acquired a quite representative collection of netsukés.

Quite recently some sixty combs have been bought at a cost of £98. Probably the vendor was indisposed to part with his collection except *en bloc*, but the result is an acquisition of certainly thirty articles which are not worthy of a place in a national or any other first-class museum, and these should at once be disposed of, if the power exists, for any sum they will fetch, a proceeding which will, however, make the balance look excessively dear.

The only means at hand for students in the provinces are their local museums, and the contributions to temporary museums lent from time to time by the Science and Art Department. As regards the former, so far as I am aware, the majority have little, if any, material of value for the purposes of study, or as an aid to manufacture. The only important collection with which I am acquainted is at Birmingham, where by the liberality of some private collectors a large amount of material has been amassed; much of this unfortunately is only second-rate, there are many duplicates, and there is little representative work in the branches which at such a centre of the metal-work industries should be most complete. Oldham has recently, also through private munificence, made a beginning; and Manchester is wisely collecting examples of textiles. As regards the Japanese contributions

sent down to local museums by the Science and Art Department, of what worth can they be when they are merely selections or duplicates of what there is at the Museum? An attempt is made to suit the exhibits to the needs of the town, but it is really pitiable to see the rubbish which is thought much of because of the source whence it comes.

The acquisition of similar objects by the two great museums must before long engage the attention of the nation. With complaints in each department as to money for the purchase of Art objects becoming scarcer and more grudgingly given at each successive vote, it is evident that some method must soon be adopted whereby a duplication in the purchase of objects shall be avoided.

A more delicate subject which is always in the mouths of collectors, but which has not as yet engaged to any extent the attention of the public, is the system at present adopted for the acquisition of objects. This is affected by a small committee, sometimes by an individual. It is taken for granted that at either museum—for the two hold no intercommunication—there are officials capable of deciding the authenticity and value of an object, whether it be Greek, Roman, Assyrian, Persian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Flemish, Italian, or what not. It would not be a whit more absurd to ask a cheesemonger to advise as to a goldsmith's work than to expect an official, who may have been selected on account of his exceptional capacity in a single branch, to decide as to the genuineness and value of pieces of all these nationalities. With such vast requirements in the way of knowledge and so many pitfalls at hand it is a marvel that so few mistakes have been made. But the state of the Japanese collections shows what an urgent call there is for an amendment in the system, which could, too, be easily and cheaply effected were it not for red-tapism. For instance, at the British Museum there are officials, whom it is needless to name, who are thorough experts in some branches of Japanese Art. Why should they not be called in when purchases at South Kensington are mooted, and if necessary fee'd for their services, and, *vice versâ?* Or again, there are collectors whose

opinions are second to none, who would willingly give their views gratuitously. At present, if an outside opinion is sought it is usually a dealer's, and therefore not always disinterested. The question has been discussed again and again by the collectors, and many who have withheld their aid because of the company in which their gifts would find themselves, would assist with cordiality if the collections were continued and completed on some such basis as that just shadowed out.

Two other matters connected with the foregoing remain to be noted: first, the visible and future supply of fine Art objects, and next, the future of Japanese Art.

At present one of our museums assumes a preference for modern over old work, and acts upon this preference in its acquisitions. Are the authorities—if they ever intend to complete their collections by the purchase of old specimens—wise in postponing indefinitely the time for so doing in the face of the following facts?

(*a.*) The Japanese Government has quite recently appointed a commission to examine all Art treasures in the temples and to devise arrangements for their effective preservation and safe guarding. This is a first step towards the placing of the whole under Government supervision, and an outlet which has long been the principal drain through which curios have left the country will shortly be stopped.*

(*b.*) The Japanese press is chiding the well-to-do of the country for their apathy and failure to recognise the value of their old Art wares. It points out that at a recent exhibition the only fine things were shown by foreign collectors, and it urges upon the Government the wisdom of providing museums, purchasing all good specimens for museums, and preventing their exportation.

(*c.*) The general consensus of opinion that the markets are getting denuded; importers, one and all, agree as to this; search has now to be made further afield in Japan; the noblemen's treasures which poured forth in such profusion when they were deprived of their revenues have long ago been distributed,

* The Government has also decided to found a Fine Arts Museum at Kyōto, and has started it with an endowment of £60,000.

and the Japanese, finding every tourist who comes to his country ransacking it for curios, and receiving regular visits from dealer after dealer, is acute enough to see the wisdom of either retaining his good things or asking an increased price for them.

(*d.*) Many of the finest manufactures have ceased to exist with the altered state of society. Silks and satin robes are not required now, when the court and everybody who would be in the fashion has adopted European costume. In their train netsukés, inros, swords, pipe-cases, etc., have also been swept away. So too, most of the household appliances made of lacquer, and kakemonos and makemonos have given way to European furniture and gaudy chromo-lithography.

At present there is only one Art museum in Japan, namely at Ueno, and that scarcely deserves the name. Two noblemen only are collectors.* But once the Japanese sees that it is the correct thing to do, both the nation and individuals must enter the market for fine things, and raise the price of them.

As regards the future of Japanese Art, I have written at some length elsewhere.† I there endeavoured to show that the altered state of circumstances and foreign competition have now rendered it almost impossible for good work to be produced. These opinions have received ample endorsement from the native press, which is urgent in calling attention to the matter. It points to the growing disfavour which Japanese Art products are receiving, owing to irregularity and want of care on the part of the workman, and the merchants glutting the market with inferior goods whenever a demand for any article arises.

We have seen (page 30) the way in which the old work was

* This statement, taken from the "Mainichi Shimbun," and endorsed by the *Japan Mail*, does not accord with the following by Professor Morse: "Nowhere in the world is the taste for collecting more common than in Japan, and the Japanese have their special fields of collecting, as, for example, pottery, tiles, pictures, books, autographs, swords, armour, brocades, etc.—these collections may be numbered by hundreds." ("Old Satsuma," *Harper's Magazine.*) Professor Morse evidently refers to those containing half-a-dozen specimens only which are numerous.

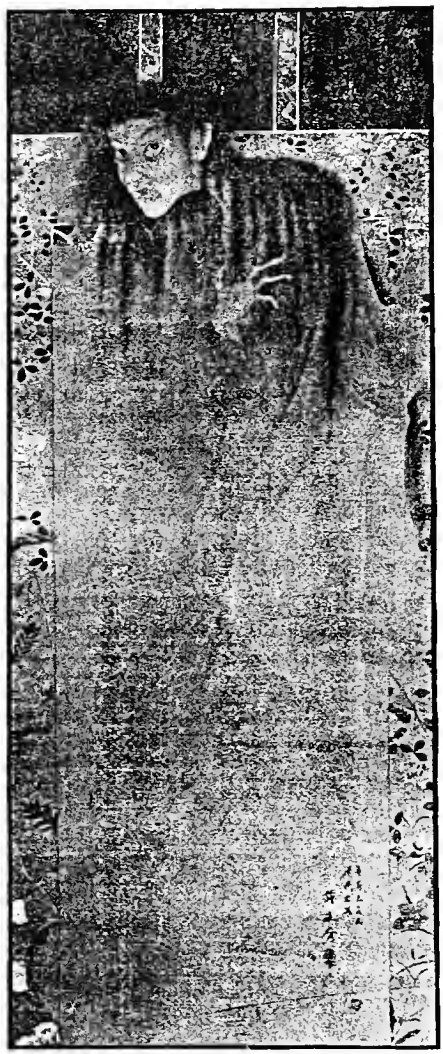
† *The Nineteenth Century*, March, 1888.

produced by craftsmen, the inheritors of secrets the result of accumulated experience extending over centuries, of considerable social status, with ample leisure, working for one master, who treated them with distinction, fed, clothed, and paid them, gave them the finest and best materials to be found in the country, and a permanent income which bore no relation to the quantity but only to the quality of their productions.

Nowadays the foreign market has taken the place of feudal patronage. Its demands are fitful, and the relation between selling price and cost of production has become essentially important. The consequence is that Art-artisans are driven to abandon their old standard and devote themselves to the manufacture of whatever pays best, prostituting the spirit of Art to the promptings of gain. They are also compelled to cater to foreign taste rather than to adhere to Japanese canons. The consequences are before us every day. How can an escape be made from it, and whence can a motive for renaissance proceed?

There is little hope in religion, for the religious instinct now only sways the lower classes. The nation is at present too much occupied with the task of recovering from the Revolution to think seriously of the artistic or the beautiful; and the upper classes spend what spare time and money they have (so the "Mainichi Shimbun" says), on carnal pleasures. The press hold forth different panaceas for the evil which all admit. But the general consensus appears to be that until Japanese Art-artisans learn the value of organization it is virtually impossible to utilise their abilities profitably. At present they cannot be depended upon to work regularly or well, they make no attempt to keep engagements, and persistently decline to regard their work as a serious matter of trade. If these failings can be corrected there will be a great future before them.

The last point of all to which I would call attention extends beyond the limits of Art and affects the British nation at large. Statistics go to show that in Japan, as elsewhere, the Germans are doing their utmost to supplant the English. Whilst our exports are decreasing theirs are augmenting by



No. 121.—*The Ghost. From a Picture by Maki Chokusai; popular School. (Nineteenth Century.) From Anderson's "Pictorial Arts of Japan."*

leaps and bounds. I have already shown (page 182) how their museums are working in an energetic way to assist them, and this is by no means all. Every one knows that nowadays success in business with foreign countries is only achieved when the traveller goes with a knowledge of the language, manners, and customs of the country. This is how they are promoting knowledge in Germany. A new Oriental College has been opened at Berlin, whereat a large number of students have matriculated, and the lectures are well and regularly attended ; there is a Japanese amongst the various professors who does not confine himself to abstruse questions of dialect, but devotes himself to the tuition of what will enable the student to go out to Japan and be "understanded of the common man." In addition to this, lectures on subjects of general interest, such as "The mode of dealing with Orientals," "Japanese poetry and Art industry," "Domestic and family life," are delivered on Saturday evenings and are open to the general public.

How does this contrast with what we are doing in England ? Last spring an endeavour was made to start a Japanese Society for the furtherance and study of Japanese Art. Not fifty members, interested in the subject, could be enrolled. One more fact—a publisher wanted a Japanese book translated into English. One man only could be found in London to undertake it, and he was a German.

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The pronunciation of Japanese letters is shortly as follows: *a* as in father; *e* as in prey; *i* as in machine; *o* as in no; where a horizontal line is over *o* or *u* the sound is prolonged; *u* as in rule; *f* as fu softly; *n* at the end of a word as ng, in the middle when followed by syllable beginning with b, m, or p, as m; no pure Japanese word begins with p; double pp shows lack of cultivation, as Nippon instead of Nipon; *r* in ri sounds dr; *s* is always sibilant as in sip; *t* in combination *d*. Nigori is the impure or soft sound of a consonant, expressed in Japanese by two dots or a circle; chi or shi becomes ji; ho, bo; tsu, dzu; su, zu; ku, gu, &c. The Japanese lettering on the back of the cover is a poetical title by Mr. Kataoka, Yamatono-nishiki, *i.e.* "a rich weaving of Yamato's glories," and the author's name.

From want of space the names of the principal artists only are mentioned in the Index.

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